PARANORMAL UNDERGROUND®

Volume 10 | Issue 12

December 2017

The Strange Magic of
SYD MOORE

MIAMI POLTERGEIST
Sun, Surf, Terror

Bad Luck & Death
OMENS

The Hauntings of
TOMBALL, TX

SHADOW PEOPLE
A State of Matter

A FRIGHTENING WEEKEND AT
THE STANLEY

ALSO INSIDE:

- Restoring Summerwind: Fox Valley Ghost Hunters
- Conspiracy Theories: What We Know vs. What We Believe
- Metaphysics Can Help You Sleep Better
- The Religious/UFO Odyssey of Dr. Barry Downing

THE HUNTRESS, THE MEDIUM, THE SHARP SHOOTER, THE TRAITOR, AND

THE FALLEN . . .

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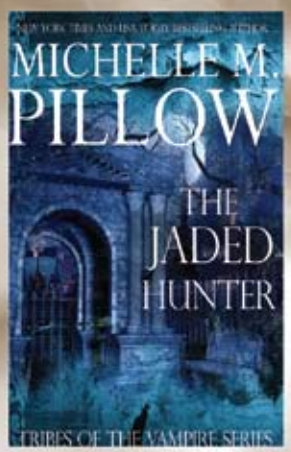
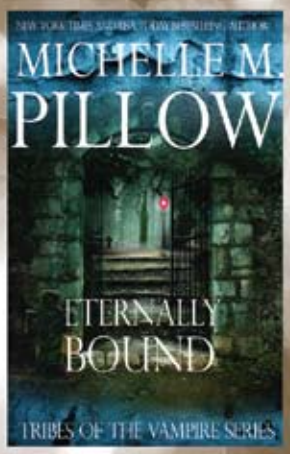
INTRODUCING

MICHELLE M. PILLOW

NYT & USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR

AWARD WINNIG AUTOR





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www.MichellePillow.com

PARANORMAL UNDERGROUND
CONTRIBUTOR & GUEST WRITER
FOR THE PAST SEVEN YEARS

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Winter has been an occultist and paranormal researcher for nearly 20 years. She has been published repeatedly since 2009 and has also been the subject of interviews regarding both areas of expertise.

Writing and witchcraft have always remained close to Winter's heart, feeling both require a profound understanding of one's self and environment. When she's not exploring the macabre and bizarre, Winter enjoys reading tarot, as well as writing poetry and short stories. All of her work can be viewed on her Website.

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MIKE BAXTER

Mike is the director of marketing and tourism for the City of Tomball, Texas. He has been in marketing for tourist attractions and destinations for almost 40 years. In that time, he has been fascinated by the number of paranormal experiences and stories reported to him wherever he worked.

From Atlanta to Savannah and Dauphin Island, Alabama to Texas, Mike has found that each story has similarities and differences. As a freelance writer, he enjoys features and personality profiles versus hard news, and getting folks to talk about their ghostly encounters makes for good writing.

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William is a psychic medium and paranormal investigator and researcher. His interest in the paranormal goes back to his early childhood when he saw his first apparition. With this interest in the paranormal, along with a degree in history, it was only natural that he would jump at the chance to combine the two by giving tours.

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Sean has written or contributed to more than 30 books for Global Communications and Inner Light Publications, all of which are available from Amazon.com. His books include *The Heretic's UFO Guidebook*, which analyzes a selection of Gnostic Christian writings and their relationship to the UFO phenomenon, and *Signs and Symbols of the Second Coming*, in which he interviews several religious and paranormal experts about how prophecies of the Second Coming of Christ may be fulfilled.

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As an investigator and evidence analyst with Spectral Tech, Bob and the team help their clients find answers while helping to educate them about the paranormal in the process.

As a special projects manager primarily involved in process engineering, and because documentation and analysis is paramount to serious investigations, Bob was drawn to take more than a passing interest and become actively involved in the study of different paranormal phenomena. He has a bachelor's degree in applied organizational management and a bachelor's in metaphysical science from the University of Metaphysics. Bob is also an ordained minister/metaphysical practitioner with the International Metaphysical Ministry.

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Karen holds a bachelor's and master's in metaphysical science from the University of Metaphysics and a Ph.D. in metaphysical parapsychology from the University of Sedona. She is an ordained minister/metaphysical practitioner with the International Metaphysical Ministry and a Usui Reiki Master/Teacher. She has completed courses in energy healing, including quantum touch, crystal healing, sound healing, and aromatherapy.

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WILLIE WINDWALKER GIBSON

Willie is a shaman and supernatural consultant. He works by himself, as well as with his wife, Schmon. He belongs to the Paranormal Clergy and Dominion Ministries. Willie is the author of two books detailing his 50-year journey in the paranormal, *The Shaman Windwalker* and *Soul Warriors*.

Willie has appeared on A&E's *Cursed: The Bell Witch* and CMTs *Most Shocking Ghosts*. He also hosted his own public access show in Louisville, Kentucky, for 12 years, called *Spiritual Gifts and Wonders*. In addition, he has his own group of sensitives, called Soul Warriors, who are based all over the US.

RICK E. HALE

A Chicago native, Rick is the founder of The Committee for Psychical Inquiry and the author of the *Geek's Guide to the Strange & Unusual*. He was the host of *Common Sense Paranormal Radio* and *Paranormal Underground Radio*.

As an investigator, Rick considers himself to be a Modern Traditionalist, meaning he believes in melding the new and old schools of psychical research.

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CHERYL KNIGHT-WILSON

Cheryl is editor-in-chief of *Paranormal Underground* magazine and producer of *Paranormal Underground Radio*. She has more than 25 years of experience as a professional writer and editor and has published hundreds of articles on topics ranging from advanced technology to paranormal investigation. Cheryl's previous magazine experience includes roles as senior and managing editor for several niche publications.

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DEBORAH LANTZ

Deborah is a psychic medium, cold case assistant, teacher, author, lecturer, and paranormal investigator. Her services have been requested at some of the most haunted locations in the U.S., including Waverly Hills Sanatorium, The Stanley Hotel, Mansfield Reformatory, Baumeister Estate (home to one of Indiana's deadliest serial killers), Sedamsville Rectory, and many others. She also speaks at paranormal and spiritual conventions.

Deborah is available for gallery readings, lectures, and readings throughout the country. She has also taught classes on psychic development and angel communication. She uses her intuitive abilities to assist those who are having paranormal and spiritual issues. Deborah believes that her job as a psychic medium is not only to help to connect people to their loved ones on the other side, but to empower everyone to listen to their own internal guidance system.

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MORGAN LINEBERRY

Morgan is a graduate from the University of North Carolina in Greensboro where she obtained a bachelor's degree in English. She has a normal day job and is not affiliated with any paranormal groups, Websites, or businesses.

She loves to write and maintains a healthy fascination with all things paranormal thanks to experiences with the unexplained that she has experienced throughout her life. Morgan knows a little bit about a lot of paranormal topics from research she has conducted. She pledges to keep you up to date about what is going bump in the night via *Paranormal Underground's* monthly news column.

MICHELLE M. PILLOW

Michelle is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author writing in many fiction genres, including the Dragon-Shifter series *Dragon Lords* and *Captured by a Dragon-Shifter* and the mischievously magical *Warlocks MacGregor*. A skeptical believer, she has a fascination with anything paranormal.

Michelle loves to travel and try new things, whether it's a paranormal investigation of an old Vaudeville theater or climbing Mayan temples in Belize. She has a BGS in history/business with an English minor and a photography degree. She is the co-owner of www.TheRavenBooks.com.

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Besides being a published author and a philosopher in physics/science with a master's in ancient alchemy, Maria Anna is also a medium with psychometric and remote viewing capabilities. She wrote The NWO, Their Thoughts ... Your Life: It's Time to Wake Up, We Are the Illusion!; Our Mind in a Controlled Quantum Euclidean Space?: Natural and Unnatural Energies as a Global Weapon for Mind and Behavior Control; and The Source of Immortality: The Global Elite and Their Fountain of Youth.

Over the past 20 years, Maria Anna has spoken to people with stories to tell in order to get to the details of strange and remarkable secrets and phenomena.

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Krystle is a long-time paranormal enthusiast and professional writer with a bachelor's degree in print journalism. When she isn't composing pieces for her own paranormal blog, GetSpooked.net, she's recording her popular podcast, *All Day Paranormal*.

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IAN WHITE

Ian is an author, journalist, and screenwriter based in the UK. He is the author of *Witchcraft and Black Magic in British Cult Cinema*. He also occasionally performs stand-up comedy. Before writing for *Paranormal Underground*, his biggest claim to fame was being killed by a dragon in a thankfully long-forgotten TV show called *Dark Knight*.

Ian has been interested in the paranormal his entire life — one of his earliest memories is waking up to find a tall shadow wearing a top hat watching him through his bedroom window when his bedroom window was two stories off the ground. And, he has had several near-misses with evil entities, although now that he's happily married he can put most of those bad dating experiences behind him.

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CHAD WILSON

A freelance writer, Chad is the publisher of *Paranormal Underground* magazine and co-producer of *Paranormal Underground Radio*. His interest in the paranormal led to the creation of www.ParanormalUnderground.net.

Chad has investigated with East Tennessee Paranormal Research Society and counts Waverly Hills Sanatorium, the Villisca Axe Murder House, Bobby Mackey's Music World, the Queen Mary, Queen Anne Hotel, Hotel Alex Johnson, and private residences among his investigations.

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Universal Love or War?
Are We Here Just to Survive?

I've asked this before, and I'll ask it again: Does life exist within our universe? Some would say yes, while others respond with an adamant no, placing us as the center of life as we know it. But I tend to disagree with the naysayers.

Chad Wilson, Publisher

In my view, the very fact that humans have life on this planet is a testament to the sure existence of life elsewhere in the Universe. If the natural capacity of things on Earth is for life to exist, then how can it not exist elsewhere, especially on planets with Earth-like conditions?

To me, it seems that life finds a way to thrive, even evolving to make that very survival even more probable.

And as life goes along, it changes according to its environment, as evidenced within humanity itself, with different races and cultures developing different genetic predispositions to account for the surrounding environment.

More so this is evidenced in our attitudes toward each other, which are surely a response meant to ensure the survivability of one culture or race over another in an eternal fight for resources and survivability on this planet.

Which makes me wonder ... does life on other planets have this same drive for the survivability of their species to the detriment of others? Are we even now being targeted for annihilation to guarantee the survival of an alien race?

Or, have the species we have come into contact with moved past this impulse to do what needs to be done to ensure the survival of their species?

My hope is that extraterrestrials have evolved to a point to where the natural impulse is not to control and destroy their environment — and the life within that environment — to ensure their own survival.

This leaves me to ponder our own species. As humanity evolves and moves on to explore and colonize our Universe, will we leave behind our old human nature? One where we must control our environment, conquer it with the attitude of let the consequences be damned.

Will we be able to evolve emotionally and spiritually to where we can interact with a different and alien culture without destroying it, or at least trying to mold it into our own image?

If not, then I fear for the future of our planet as we come into contact with extraterrestrial life. I mean, if we can't quell the desires to conquer and hold power over others, even extraterrestrials, the distant future — or maybe not so distant — could present dire consequences for humanity. ◆

January 12-14, 2018
Marscon
Doubletree Williamsburg Hotel
Williamsburg, Virginia
http://www.marscon.net/wp/

January 12-15, 2018
HAuNTcon
Ernest N Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, Louisiana
http://hauntcon.com/

January 14, 2018
Winter ParaFest
Nashvilles
Henrietta, New York
https://www.facebook.com/pg/Winterparafest/about/?ref=page_internal

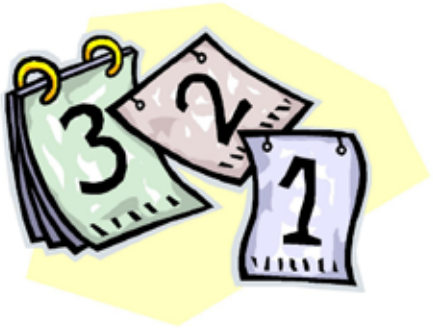
January 27, 2018
sQuatch Fest
Cowlitz County Expo Center
Longview, Washington
https://kelsolongviewchamber.org/squatch-fest/info

February 2-4, 2018
Days of the Dead: Atlanta
Atlanta Sheraton
Atlanta, Georgia
https://daysofthedead.com/atlanta/

February 9–12, 2018
Conscious Life Expo
LAX Hilton
Los Angeles, California
http://www.consciouslifeexpo.com/2018-expo/welcome_4.html

February 14–18, 2018
International UFO Congress Conference
We-Ko-Pa Resort and Conference Center
Scottsdale, Arizona
http://ufocongress.com/

February 17, 2018
Twinsburg Paranormal Conference
Twinhaven Reception Center
Twinsburg, Ohio
http://twinsburgparanormal.com/



February 24, 2018
SWFL UFO & Paranormal Conference
Araba Shrine Temple
Fort Myers, Florida
https://www.swflupc.com/

May 5–6, 2018
Paranormal Supernatural Conference
PPA Event Center
Denver, Colorado
https://constancecoo.wixsite.com/psc2018

May 17–19, 2018
McMenamins UFO Festival
Hotel Oregon
McMinnville, Oregon
http://ufofest.com/

June 1–4, 2018
Contact in the Desert
Renaissance Resort
Indian Wells, California
http://contactinthedesert.com/

June 16, 2018
Minerva Monster Day
Minerva High School
Minverva, Ohio
http://minervamonsterday.com/

June 22–24, 2018
Alien Cosmic Expo
Toronto, Ontario
https://aliencosmicexpo.com/

June 23, 2018
Awakening UFO & Conscious Life Expo
Machester, UK
http://awakeningufo.com/ ◆

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Haunted Earth & Strange Space

By Morgan Lineberry

HAUNTED FLOATING CITY

We've all heard of lost cities such as El Dorado or Atlantis. Cities that have been buried under the sea, collapsed in an earthquake, or been annihilated by a volcano. I mean, hey, things happen. Stuff gets lost all the time. I am still looking for that left sock that I know I washed a week ago. However, something I have never heard of is finding an entire city floating in the ocean.

Pictured at left: Nan Madol ruins on Pohnpei island. (Photo: CT Snow via Wikimedia Commons)

I suppose there is a first time for everything, because a "mysterious ancient city" on a "remote island" actually exists in the Pacific Ocean. The city, known as Nan Madol, is virtually uninhabited and was dubbed the "Eighth World Wonder" by early European explorers.

The city consists of "97 individual blocks, which are geometrically shaped and separated by narrow channels of water — but the reason why is not entirely clear," according to Anna Slater of the *Mirror*. Scientists do know that the island served as a burial site for chiefs and was "the center of the most important religious rituals," probably involving sacrifices as many ancient rituals did.

All of this is interesting and weird enough for me, but not enough for my readers. Oh, no! The weirdness factor increases when you learn that this lovely vacation spot is reportedly haunted.

Some people have nicknamed it the "ghost city," and locals have claimed to see strange, glowing orbs on Nan Madol at night. People even go so far as to claim that if a person stays overnight, they will die. Of course, no one has confirmed this, because most people are smart enough not to risk it, and perhaps those who have risked it were never heard from again.

ANGRY GHOSTS AT HAUNTED UK ASYLUM

If you are fond of a classic haunting, this next story about a haunted asylum in the UK is right up your alley. Ghost hunters from the "Supernatural Staffordshire's Damon Simms and members of Afterlife insist they were verbally abused by a spirit while examining a stairway, which was fitted with a suicide cage, at the former St. George's Hospital at Stafford," according to a report in *The Sentinel* by Richard Ault.

I don't know about the rest of you, but haunted mental asylums are right under mysterious floating haunted islands on my list of travel destinations, especially ones with such vocal spirits.

The spirit reportedly swore at the ghost hunters and told them to "get out." One investigator even claimed to

Pictured at left: St. George's Hospital at Stafford in the UK. (Photo: county asylums.co.uk)

have been "held from behind" by a particularly physical ghost, while another picked up the noises of "several children, nurses, and patients, including a man called Leonard and another named Stan."

Clearly this establishment was less than pleasant while it was active, and much of that pain and suffering has carried on long after the death of the residents.

MONSTER PLANET DISCOVERED

Have you ever noticed how people like to think they know everything? Mainly because of limited understanding and closed-mindedness, we humans tend to believe that if we cannot comprehend something, then it cannot happen. For example, planets need to be a certain size in proportion to the stars they revolve around (think Earth-to-Sun ratio). So, a monster planet revolving around a small star is impossible.

Yet, it exists! And this "huge 'monster' planet that's far too big for its sun could lead scientists to rethink their theories of astronomy," according to Andrew Griffin of the *Independent*.

I'm not a scientist or astronomer, but I understand that a star has to be a certain size to hold a planet in its orbit. This new planet is known as NGTS-1b. While it's the size of Jupiter, it "orbits around a red dwarf star that's only half the size of its sun." Again, this planet has a sun, yet it orbits a small star that is half the size. This is scientifically impossible ... or so we thought.

If science can be wrong about this, just imagine the possibilities — life on other planets, creatures in our oceans, the existence of spirits and monsters, or other worlds and dimensions.

Furthermore, NGTS-1b is about 600 light years from Earth, so just imagine what might be waiting for us when we can get a little closer. Hopefully, nothing like what is in my next story.

UFO SHOOTS DOWN MILITARY DRONE

The reportedly "leaked" video of a UFO shooting down a military drone shows a less-than-friendly encounter with a potential extraterrestrial. The "supposedly leaked government footage" shows a drone tracking a small object through a mountain range in Afghanistan.

"The mystery craft being tailed then disappears, but when the drone follows it, a bright light is seemingly fired directly at it from the unknown object," according to Jon Austin of the *Express*. The light is the last thing we can see on the video before the camera is damaged and the screen goes black.

The YouTuber who posted the video explained that "x-military people" have confirmed "that this footage seems genuine drone footage." Not only that, but the attack has been called the "tip of the iceberg." There has been an "increase of UFOs interacting with military drones" recently, which leads me to wonder if this is not one of many warnings to a planet that is reaching too far and learning too much.

Some viewers remain skeptical as to the legitimacy of the video, questioning whether the government would allow this video to be leaked — an oxymoronic question, in my opinion, as the entire point of a leaked video is that it was not meant to be leaked. My question is this: If this is not a UFO shooting down a drone, what is it? It does not look like anything humans would use to shoot down an aircraft. We have guns and missiles, not lasers.

It is unnerving to say the least. So, if anyone needs me, I'll be hiding in that haunted asylum until further notice.

Got paranormal news? Email us at editor@paranormalunderground.net and fill us in on the scoop. ◆

Restoring Summerwind

Fox Valley Ghost Hunters

By Cheryl Knight

After spending a lot of time hanging out at the abandoned Summerwind mansion in Land O' Lakes, Wisconsin, during the 1980s with friends, Craig Nehring experienced things he could not explain. Those experiences eventually led him to create his own paranormal investigative team in 2010, named Fox Valley Ghost Hunters (FVGH).

The primary mission of FVGH includes helping residents of Wisconsin and the surrounding area understand paranormal activity in their homes or places of business. Craig recently spoke with *Paranormal Underground* magazine about FVGH, its investigations and methods, and the effort to restore Summerwind mansion.

* * * * *

Q: Tell us about yourself.

Craig: I was born in Milwaukee in 1969. My parents built a lake cottage up north in Minocqua, where we moved when I was only 10. When I was 30, I moved to the Appleton area to go to school for semi-truck driving. Since starting FVGH in 2010, I wrote a book called *Wisconsin's Most Haunted* with my coauthor Enid Cleaves. I'm working on my second book, due out in a few months, called *Wisconsin's Most Haunted Vol. 2.*

My hobbies, other than ghost-hunting, include fishing, snowmobiling, and disk golf.

Q: Why did you create your own paranormal investigation team?

Craig: When I lived in Minocqua, I lived very close to Summerwind mansion, and my friends and I would go up there to hang out in the early 80s, before it burned to the ground. During that time, we would see shadows and many other things we couldn't explain, including lights

Craig Nehring founded Fox Valley Ghost Hunters in 2010. He is the coauthor of the book *Wisconsin's Most Haunted* and has investigated haunted sites ranging from Waverly Hills Sanatorium to Summerwind mansion.

The Fox Valley Ghost Hunters team (pictured above) investigates Waverly Hills Sanatorium in Kentucky. The team has investigated many others locations over the years, including Summerwind mansion, the Villisca Ax Murder House, Edinburgh Manor, Mansfield Prison, and Titletown Brewery.

going on upstairs with no electricity. I was young then, but it piqued my curiosity.

When I moved to Appleton in 2010, there were tons of ghost-hunting shows on TV, and I thought it would be cool to have my own team. So, I started FVGH. In the beginning, it was only some of my friends and their friends who were investigating with me. At the time, we mostly just investigated cemeteries, and while doing that was fun, I wanted to do bigger and better things.

I had a Website designed and made business cards, and we got a huge break. Someone knew of an old hospital in New London, Wisconsin. We were asked to come in and investigate, along with newspaper staff from Appleton, which had gotten word about our investigation and wanted to come along. We had a great investigation, and we captured a voice saying, "Mommy," on audio. The newspaper staff who joined us also captured that same voice saying, "Mommy," on their audio equipment.

An article appeared in the Post Crescent on Black Friday of 2010. Not long after that, most of the friends and family kind of got preoccupied with things, and they went their separate ways from the team. I then had to look for new members and found some by advertising on Craigslist.

We then started to get into many new and interesting places, and most of the team that was with me in 2011 are still with me today, along with some new members. We have about eight women and three men on the team presently.

Q: What is your team's mission?

Craig: Our team is dedicated to helping our clients and also making sure all private investigations in our clients' homes remains confidential. We are always on time, and our goal is to find the best possible answer or logical explanation for our clients' hauntings, and we work to debunk any natural causes not related to paranormal activity.

All of our investigations are free. We do take donations for gas.

→

Pictured above is the haunted, abandoned Summerwind mansion in Land O' Lakes, Wisconsin, before it burned down in 1988. There are current efforts to restore the mansion to its former glory.

Q: What types of sites do you investigate?

Craig: We investigate all types of places, including both residential homes and businesses. Some investigations that we have done through the years have included an old factory and a church in Berlin, Wisconsin; a ship in Duluth, Minnesota; two schools in Wisconsin Rapids and one in Iowa; and a few sanatoriums and prisons.

Q: What methods do you use to investigate paranormal activity?

Craig: We go over the history of the location to see if there is anyone we might try to communicate with who has been at the site in the past. We also do baseline readings with our equipment to make sure that when we do the investigation we are not coming across big electrical spikes caused by natural causes of wiring and electronic equipment.

We always do our EVP sessions with a voice recorder and we conduct ghost box sessions to try to communicate in real time with the spirits. We use men and women on the team, as sometimes young children are said to haunt certain locations, and sometimes those spirits would rather communicate with a women team member or vice versa.

Q: What type of equipment do you use?

Craig: Our equipment ranges from voice recorders to a ghost box to K-II meters. We also have REM-Pods and a DVR system with four infrared cameras to record while on location the entire time. We have standalone video cameras on tripods. We also have a thermal camera to take readings for cold and hot spots.

Q: You have a special connection with Summerwind Mansion. What is so special about the site?

Craig: My Summerwind connection seems to be like everyone else who is drawn to it from around the world. Plus, our team is close to the owners, who have a dream to restore the property into a B&B. They purchased it in 1986 as an anniversary present. Later, in 1988, lightning was the supposed cause of a fire in the middle of the night

Pictured above: Inside Summerwind mansion before it burned down in 1988.

that turned it into a pile of ash — other than the remaining chimneys that still stand and the stone foundation.

Our team and I have been going to Summerwind for years, and we camp on the property with permission from the owners, since it is private property. It is always very peaceful, and something just seems to draw us there year after year to investigate and talk to the spirits that once had a home to wander in.

The current owners have had some hard times lately, and our goal is to help them rebuild Summerwind.

Q: Tell us about your team's investigations and findings at Summerwind.

Craig: Our investigations have been awesome at Summerwind, from the first time to our ongoing investigations. Some of the more interesting events include having rocks thrown at us that seem to come out of the sky. Another team witnessed the rocks coming out of the sky at them as well.

It started when an investigator of ours, named Jason, tossed a rock down into the foundation, and something flew back at him from another direction. His first thoughts were that someone was messing with him on the team, but it wasn't any of us. He tossed another rock, and another came back at him but from up high this time. Suddenly, our team of about eight people were having rocks land near and all around us. I picked one up, and it was small like a penny.

Jason then had a rock hit his cheek. So, I pulled out a thermal camera to make sure no one was around us, such as kids in the woods or neighbors. No one was there besides our team members.

The rocks continued being thrown for about an hour and then stopped as suddenly as it started. Later in the evening after we went to bed, I was awakened to girls on our team screaming to us. I came out of the tent to find out what was wrong and found the same thing happening, rocks coming out of the sky, but only onto their tent. That lasted about half an hour and then stopped.

Later in the week from home, I checked to see if any birds could do this, and the answer was no. So this mystery remained unsolved as to what caused it and why. This also happened one other time again.

Some of the EVPs captured from Summerwind happened while I was walking through the woods. A deer had startled me, and I yelled out. Later on review of audio, a spirit said, "What an ass." Another spirit said, "Dammit, I am being bad."

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New evidence suggests that Summerwind mansion may have been intentionally burned down back in 1988.

While using the ghost box one evening, a male's voice said, "Little girl dead is your friend." Also while using the ghost box and K-II meters together, the K-II went off with no electricity. And on the ghost box, a couple of voices are heard warning us that someone is coming up the driveway, they are vindictive, and to go catch them.

One of our members ran to check the driveway, and they found three kids trying to break into our cars. The kids ran off when confronted by our team member. So the ghosts warned us!

One other interesting moment is when I asked two of our female team members to sit up in the woods by themselves with a handheld radio in case they needed to call us. An hour later, the girls screamed and yelled over the radio for us to come to the wooded area. When we got there, they were visibly shaken, but not because of a spirit. As they were sitting there, a raccoon fell out of the tree and landed next to them.

We all laughed, but later when I went over audio with a camera that I had pointed at them, I discovered a voice after the girls had calmed down saying, "I pushed it."

There are too many stories from Summerwind to list here.

Q: Originally, it was reported that Summerwind burned down due to a lighting strike. But recent developments could suggest otherwise. What can you tell us about new revelations about the destruction of Summerwind?

Craig: Summerwind was supposedly struck by lightning on Father's Day of 1988 in a pouring rainstorm. It was actually said that it was struck by lightning twice, which led me to believe over the years that something was fishy. There are tall trees that stand much higher than Summerwind. And Summerwind has been there since 1914 with no such strikes.

Over the past few years, while doing events at Summerwind, two former fire department employees told me that what happened was a controlled burn. However, they would not give me their names.

Just recently, Summerwind has gotten quite a bit of attention with all the radio shows I have been doing and a Webpage for Summerwind Restoration Society. On the last guest outing this year in August, a man in his late 50s visited our event and said his uncle had the cabin next store to Summerwind from late 1950s to 1993, and he was up on Father's Day of 1988 for the weekend. He said they were there Thursday, June 16, 1988, at his uncle's house, when a town board member came up to his uncle's cabin and knocked on the door. He said that if they see a fire in the woods the next night or so, not to call the fire department because they were going to be on scene. Their first thoughts were that it had to do with the mansion called Summerwind.

The next night it was a nice night, and no one showed up at all. But the night after, Saturday, June 18, 1988, he was sitting on the front porch with a friend of his, when they heard a commotion. Up pulled a fire truck between Summerwind and their house, and guys hopped off and ran a hose down to the lake past their house. It was pouring rain outside, as a storm had been going most of the evening, but he stated there was very little lightning.

The two of them, who were in their 30s, put on their rain gear to go check out what was going on. They walked up past the fire truck and up to the mansion. They spotted another pumper truck in the driveway and a sheriff's car at the end of the driveway with its lights flashing. They then watched a smaller brush-type fire truck back down to the mansion. The firefighters got out, and others walked over to lift off huge bales of hay. They watched them walk into the foundations and spread it out in the middle of the mansion.

It was easy to see as there were no windows or doors on the mansion from all of the vandals. Once the hay was spread in the middle, the firefighters walked out and away from the building. One other firefighter grabbed a propane torch, walked inside, lit the hay, and walked out. He then walked to the other buildings on the property, likes the maids' quarters and servants' quarters, and lit the inside of them with the propane torch as well. Then they all sat back along with the rest of the firefighters.

One of the guys who had stopped over the other day walked over to the witnesses and said that the rest of the town members were standing over there, and he pointed to them and then looked back at the witness and said, "You know, lightening struck this twice." And then he walked away.

Our witness was afraid to tell anyone what had happened because his uncle needed some permits for his property, and he was worried the town would go after them. He saw our event online and wanted to tell us the truth of what happened.

I asked the Vilas County Sheriff's Department for any info on the fire in 1988 at the mansion, and they said they no longer had records for the fire. I talked to the Fire Department, and the Fire Department had no records on the fire anymore either. How convenient is that? The time frame of the witness seeing them start the fire would be around midnight to maybe 1 a.m. on a stormy night.

Recently, an anonymous source came forward to say the following:

> *I was very good friends with classmates that their parents were on the town board. I was told after the fire by one classmate who knew I was into ghosts that she had been told by her father (who was on the city board) that things on the property had gotten to a level that troubled them, and they were afraid that something was going to hurt trespassers due to a recent incident that the town burnt the house down and said it was due to lightning.*

Fox Valley Ghost Hunters and the Summerwind Restoration Society are seeking funding to rebuild Summerwind.

Q: There is a current effort to restore Summerwind. What can you tell us about that?

Craig: Working with the owners, as well as being co-founder of Summerwind Restoration Society, we have been doing tons of events. We are now at a stage where we are looking for backers to fund the project to create a new mansion and make it into a B&B.

I have been in touch which *Ghost Adventures'* writer and researcher Jeff Belanger, and he was hoping to help us find the people that could fund the project. We haven't found anyone as of yet, but this is a huge opportunity for someone to be a part of something that has never been done before at this level. No one has ever rebuilt a haunted mansion with so much history. So right now we are looking for someone who wants to take that chance.

Q: What is most important for our readers to know about your team?

Craig: The most important thing about our team is we are very dedicated in what we do, and with Summerwind being such a huge project, it makes it even more gratifying hoping we can find the right people to help. I am very determined and have faith that this will happen. Let's put it this way: I don't give up easily.

Q: What is in store for the future of your team?

Craig: Looking to the future, we are going to be hosting an event at a haunted school called Farrar in Iowa this June for guests. Then in July, we are spending two nights at St. Albans Sanatorium in Virginia. Our bucket list would include an overnight investigation at a haunted castle, such as Bran Castle.

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For more information about Fox Valley Ghost Hunters, visit their Website at http://www.fvghosthunters.com/ and Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/groups/122544501098728/. ◆

THE FOURTH KIND

Shadow People: A Strange State of Matter

By Maria Anna van Driel, nexttruth.com

Who or what are shadow people? Are they just figments of a creepy legend that speaks of human-shaped shadows having ill intentions toward us? Or is there another explanation?

Shadow people have been reported by witnesses throughout time as terrifying black mists or forms, usually standing alongside a person's bed at night ... watching them while they sleep. These in-the-dark, eerie shadows are one of the most common forms of ghosts people have witnessed.

Some people believe these scary shadows are disembodied humans who are lost; they did not go forward in their life's journey by refusing to go toward the light that will lead them to the next phase after their physical body died. For others, these shadow figures are just a result of sleep paralysis, an explainable cause.

Still, most people who have seen such dark apparitions (malevolent or not) do not have a conclusive explanation for what they have witnessed.

In this article, I share with you my theory about shadow people: On one hand, I believe shadow people can be partly projected holographically by our own thoughts and emotions. And on the other hand, this phenomenon can be created by electrical fields, as well as from alpha and beta particles.

Let's explore the science behind this and examine what can give us a plausible answer to the existence of shadow people — and even proof that they are real.

Can Our Emotions Cause Shadow People?

Emotions in an extreme state, including fear, excitement, or love, do have the power of creating a strange kind of stress in our atoms. And by doing so, emotions can release a very small amount of Gamma-waves, which are

stored inside the nucleus of the atom, and transfer from one person to another due a phenomenon we know as telepathy. It is very plausible that the source for a ghostly apparition lies in such a natural process, as well as in electromagnetic radiation and/or Quark-Gluon Plasma (QGP).

QGP (fourth state of matter) can form a biological projection of holographic information that is bouncing off or captured in a (electro) magnetic field ... what could be described as a smaller version of the holographic duality from the Universe.

This kind of matter has the ability to react to your thermal heat, body vibrations, and your brainwaves, which are being transmitted by a weak electrical field having multiple origins; for example, from static electricity from your clothing. During an event like this, you are observing the effects of the charged particles inside the electromagnetic field of the QGP itself. (Check out this video: Shadow People at the CERN, https://youtu.be/-ibhsjw91wk.)

What Else Could Cause Shadow People?

Some logical questions to ask are below.

Is this holographic information coming from inherited memories and stored inside our atoms, which can be projected as a 3D and free-floating image (as in quantum holography) due to stressed cells that are shooting super photons as a reaction and can become visible due to UV or LED light, for instance, when hitting its low magnetic field in the right angle and with the right speed?

Could it be a fact that we are watching a form of high-dimensional, holographic entangled memories that are unintentionally transmitted from another universe/galaxy that can be interpreted in different ways due the position of the observer when it enters a state of that of a helical phase hologram?

Are we looking at a forgotten life form created in the first moments during the creation of our Universe (the Big Bang), having a similar awareness of its surrounding like we do but is walking another wavelength within our dimension?

Or are we just witnessing a natural but still an incomprehensible quantum process of electrons absorbing coded photons and transferring this (intelligent) information due to a crazy form of quantum tunneling by using, for example, its own potential energy, as well as that of the stressed cells inside the human body?

(Potential energy is the energy possessed by a body by virtue of its position relative to others, stresses within itself, electric charge, and other factors.)

These are all questions and mind-bending theories concerning the possibility of a real species within a plasma energy bearing, for example, the name The Shadow People. A species that is often seen fleeing if they realize they have been detected, a behavior that can indicate an understanding of its surroundings, how to move through space-time and between different dimensions, and maybe even possessing an understanding of how to manipulate and control the behavior of its atoms within a low magnetic field and the electromagnetic radiation of wavelengths.

Now, knowing that a shadow is an indication of the absence of light, for some it is almost logical to think of gluons (an elementary particle that acts as the exchange particle and "glues" quarks together), electromagnetic radiation, and (quark-gluon) plasma(s) in this creepy legend.

QGP is a (fourth) state of matter in quantum chromodynamics and is thought to consist of asymptotically free quarks and gluons, which are several of the basic building blocks of matter as we know it today.

A New State of Matter

In the 1980s and 1990s, several experiments at CERN's Super Proton Synchrotron particle accelerator tried to create the QGP. The results led CERN to announce possessing indirect evidence for a "new state of matter" in 2000.

In June 2015, an international team of physicists produced QGP at CERN's Large Hadron Collider by

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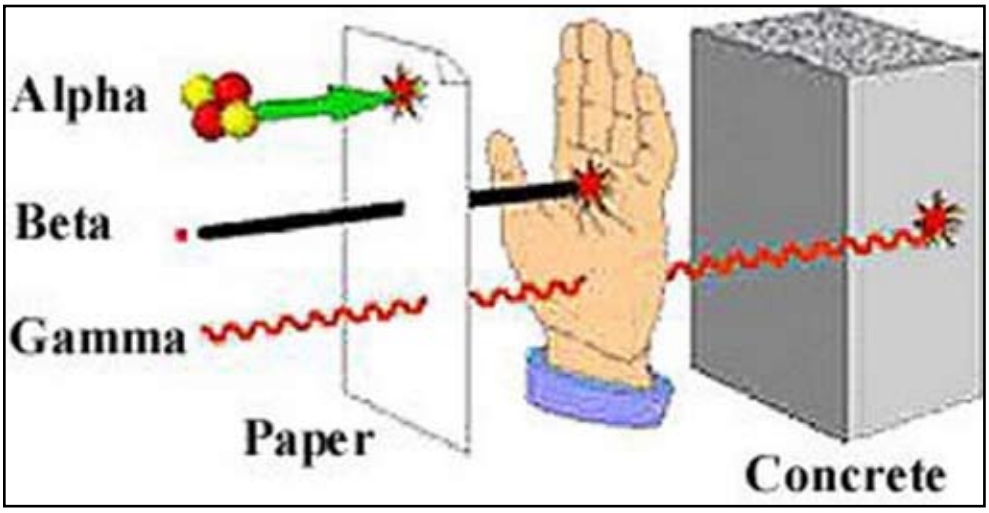
colliding protons with lead nuclei at high energy inside the supercollider's Compact Muon Solenoid detector. They also discovered that this new state of matter "behaves" like a strange kind of fluid.

Gluons (a part of the sacred knowledge and seen in the capital G of the Freemason symbol) are the exchange particles for the color force between quarks that keep the nucleus of the atom together. The gluon (giving an object its mass or zero mass) can be considered to be the fundamental exchange particle underlying the strong interaction between protons and neutrons in a nucleus.

When this strange behavior is not taking place, the atom falls apart, whereby the mass of the object will change instantly, which could give a result of an object changing into a crazy form of being radioactive (electromagnetic radiation).



What Does the Big Bang Theory Have to Do With All This?

But what will happen when we remove, reduce, or increase those gluons or glue-balls (clusters of gluons)? If you remove these "sticky particles" called gluons from a nucleus, the nucleus will split. This process of splitting a nucleus is called nuclear fission and releases a high amount of energy. (Da Vinci drew it as a Y symbol; physics is using this symbol and calls it "Gamma," and the church represents this same "divine" light in the way Jesus is being crucified.)

Luckily for us, this process only can take place at extreme conditions of temperature. For instance, think of endothermic (cold spots) and exothermic reactions, because "extreme" does not necessarily mean enormous or big. Increasing or reducing will create strange behavior in gravity fields; strong gravity fields are slowing down time, as weak gravity fields are speeding up time.

If such a (quantum) process has taken place at the beginning of time as we know it, it also could have given a result of free building blocks within a low magnetic field, floating through outer-space as dark or neon-colored plasma clouds.

And if these plasma energies have swirled down to the Earth's surface and gained a form of mass due to, for example, magnetic fields and chemical reactions while our primal DNA (having partly its origin in panspermia) was still struggling to survive volcanic gasses and crazy pressures in order to reach adulthood, we suddenly understand the term "fallen angels" or "the gods of the sky," an intelligent evolution created during that well-known collision we know as the Big Bang Theory.

Looking at evolution from this angle, it is possible that the first and completed life forms on this planet were strange plasma bubbles containing strange density, mass, and an intelligence (intelligence as in anthropology) having its origin in a QGP and/or electromagnetic radiation and created over time a highly devolved intellect (not to be mixed-up with intelligence) due to the absorbing of coded photons.

Possessing such intellect could have resulted in gaining the knowledge of how to control their atomic behavior and creating a form of time travel by using the small differences in the Earth's gravitational fields, as well as creating the very first simple biological systems from our primal DNA in order to use these systems for the survival of its own species.

This scary idea of parallel evolutions could prove, in a creepy way, plasma energies being the original inhabitants of this planet, as well as our ancestors (Lucy for instance), are the true alien life forms we are looking for if we include electrons having the possibility to absorb (coded) photons, which do not have to come from the Universe by definition.

Could they have come from the Ancient Egypt, the Pyramids, and the Slingshot Theory ... coded photons swirling the Earth's atmosphere containing ancient information and hitting the electrons of our ancestors after secret ancient funeral rites/rituals and becoming a part of human DNA?

Shadow people ... are they real as in the Schrödinger equation? Or are they real as in an ancient intelligent life form? And ... are they still among us? ◆

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The Strange Magic of Syd Moore

By Ian White

It's been a very busy year for author Syd Moore. Not only have the first two books in her paranormally themed *Rosie Strange* series received a fantastic reception in both the U.K. and the U.S., the third book in the series is due for publication mid-2018. And, she's just about to start work on the fourth.

The *Strange* novels are a breath of fresh air for fans of supernatural mysteries. In the first story, *Strange Magic*, feisty Benefit Fraud inspector Rosie Strange reluctantly inherits her late uncle's witch museum and then finds herself dashing around the English countryside with her new colleague Sam Stone, evading some seriously nasty occultists while searching for the powerful bones of an executed witch.

In the second story, *Strange Sight*, the pair go on the trail of a murderous specter who is terrorizing and slashing her way through the staff of an upmarket London restaurant. Next year's follow-up, *Strange Fascination*, will see Rosie and Sam tangling with witchcraft again.

They are all fantastic books, and I can't recommend them highly enough.

Syd's wide-ranging career has included marketing and PR, lecturing in publishing, and presenting the Channel 4 TV program *Pulp* in the U.K. Just like Rosie Strange (and also like the heroines of her earlier novels *The Drowning Pool* and *Witch Hunt*), Syd is a proud "Essex girl," hailing from the county that was once at the heart of England's 15th/16th century witch hysteria.

Many readers might have heard of the Essex girl stereotype (if you haven't, keep reading), but Essex witches and witch hunters have even extended their influence as far as Salem, Massachusetts. And, as I discovered when I chatted with Syd, there's a very good chance that Essex girls and witchcraft may still be very closely related ...

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Syd Moore is an author inspired by the history and legacy of the 19th Century Essex witch trials. Her published works include the fictional mystery books *Witch Hunt, The Drowning Pool, Strange Magic: An Essex Witch Museum Mystery*, and *Strange Sight: An Essex Witch Museum Mystery*.

Q: Tell us about being an Essex girl and the link between Essex girls and witchcraft.

Syd: Well, for a start, being an Essex girl meant I had to put up with an awful lot of shit during the 80s and pretty much from that point onwards! I worked in publishing in London for quite a long time and then moved back to Essex about 14 years ago.

When I started lecturing at the local college, I was blown away by the fact that the girls, when they went off for university interviews, would often come back and say the guys who'd been interviewing them had looked at their details and opened with, "Ah, so you're an Essex girl are you?"

I don't think it was meant as a jab; it was meant to be an amusing ice-breaker, but it prompted me to start writing articles about the Essex girl for a magazine, asking the question — when you get away from the 80's stereotype, which is that Essex girls are supposedly a bit vacuous and promiscuous — is she actually in the 21st century just a sexually autonomous and liberated woman who knows her own mind?

And then I got together with a local artist, Heidi Wigmore, and we made a pack of cards that looked at the Essex girl and all the other different female stereotypes and examined them in a more positive way. We called the game Super Strumps, to spoof the Top Trumps craze that was really popular at the time.

One of the things that I've always been aware of is that if you've got a message and you want things to change, you can't just shout about it or bang on about it, because people turn off; they won't listen. But if you can do it with humor and get people to realize you're not confronting them, that you're opening a conversation with them and they're allowed to laugh, they're much more susceptible to the messages you're trying to work with.

So, in Super Strumps, the Essex girl's positives are things like drinking capacity and being immune to cold, whereas the career woman can penetrate glass ceilings and the old biddy can turn invisible at will. Using humor to get your message across in a non-confrontational way is really important, and — as well as sending shivers through my reader's spines — that's one of the things I wanted to work with in the *Strange* series so that I can get my message out to as big an audience as I possibly can.

I'm also involved with the Essex Girls Liberation Front, a group of friends who are trying to get the *Collins English Dictionary* definition of "Essex girl" amended, because it says an Essex girl is "a working-class woman from the Essex area considered as unintelligent, materialistic, devoid of taste, and sexually promiscuous," which is absolutely appalling.

I work a couple of days a week for a local arts charity, and when we do our annual "Village Green" festival, we wear T-shirts that say, "This is what an Essex girl looks like," and we also get other people to wear them — including men, in solidarity! — and then have their photos taken and write down what their definition of an Essex girl is. Unsurprisingly, it's never what the dictionary says.

So as far as the witches are concerned — when I started researching the witch hunts and looked at the characteristics of the women who were accused, a lot of them had bastard children and were very poor, a lot were old, most of them were on the lower end of the social scale and pretty much uneducated, and they were seen as

STRANGE
MAGIC
SYD
MOORE
'The rarest of things: a book which sets out unashamedly to entertain, and does so with wit, style and erudition.'
SARAH PERRY, AUTHOR OF
THE ESSEX SERPENT

"Rosie Strange doesn't believe in ghosts or witches or magic. No, not at all. It's no surprise therefore when she inherits the ramshackle Essex Witch Museum, her first thought is to take the money and run. ... Rosie is quickly expelled from her comfort zone, where to her horror, the secrets of the past come with their own real, and all too present, danger as a strange magic threatens to envelop them all."

Syd was the founding editor of Level 4, an arts and culture magazine based in South Essex in the UK. (Photo by Amy Freeborn.)

"loose." At that time, the term 'loose women' meant not being under the protection or control of a man. So, after thinking about that and about how Essex was popularly known as "witch county," I wondered if the stigma that was attached to the women and witches of Essex — who were really notorious throughout the UK and across the continent — had never really gone but just mutated.

Maybe the Essex girl stereotype arrived because there was already this feeling that there was something a bit dirty and low class about the women of Essex and, just like the witch, the Essex girl challenges the norms of social behavior. She is quite threatening to a lot of men because, supposedly, she's out to snare them and quite threatening to other women because she's supposedly out to snare their men! Like the witch, the Essex girl is seen as morally inappropriate.

Q: Why do you think Essex was such a hotbed for witches?

Syd: There are lots of theories: One is about the dissolution of the monasteries and that we don't have very many stately homes in Essex, because most of them were sacked and raised to the ground, so there was no one to oversee the parishes.

There's also the idea that Essex was cut off because we've got so many marshy inlets and little villages all over the place — it was very rural and people had to use the waterways to get around, so maybe traders brought back stories of the Inquisition and the witch hunts that were happening over on the continent.

There's also a theory about ergot poisoning, although I don't think that's fashionable anymore. If you drill down into the statistics, there are witch finders at the heart of all of this — Matthew Hopkins, the "Witchfinder General," was one, and then, before him, it was Brian Darcy. They ripped it up. Essex had more indictments for witchcraft than in any other part of the U.K. except for Scotland.

Q: Was there any witchcraft in your family tree?

Syd: No! Although my nan — who always considered herself a devout Christian (well, not devout actually, she used to go to the Christian social club because they picked her up!) — occasionally did fairy cures and folk magic. She lived in a village called Hockley, in a cottage with a really big garden, and at the bottom of the garden there was a kind of mound that had white flowers on it. My nan told us there were fairies there.

Whenever we stayed with her, we used to go down to the fairy mound before we went to bed and leave bits of food out for them! She also used to read tea leaves, and when I was about 15, I had a wart on my hand that wouldn't go away. So, she suddenly said, "Right, we're going to get rid of that tonight," and then she did the "giving the wart to someone else" thing — she rubbed a piece of meat onto the wart to "give the wart to the meat," added a little bit of fur from the black cat who lived next door, and then buried it near the fairy mound at midnight. Within a week, the wart had dropped off.

She was also a fantastic storyteller. She lived in London's East End during the Blitz, and she'd retell old fairy tales but give them an East End twist.

Q: Is that where your interest in storytelling and the supernatural comes from?

Syd: Without a doubt. And where fairy tales were concerned, I was always much more interested in witches because I was a bit of a tomboy, and I always thought princesses were just so dull, moping around waiting to get rescued or married and leading this really passive life.

On the other hand, witches were living on their own,

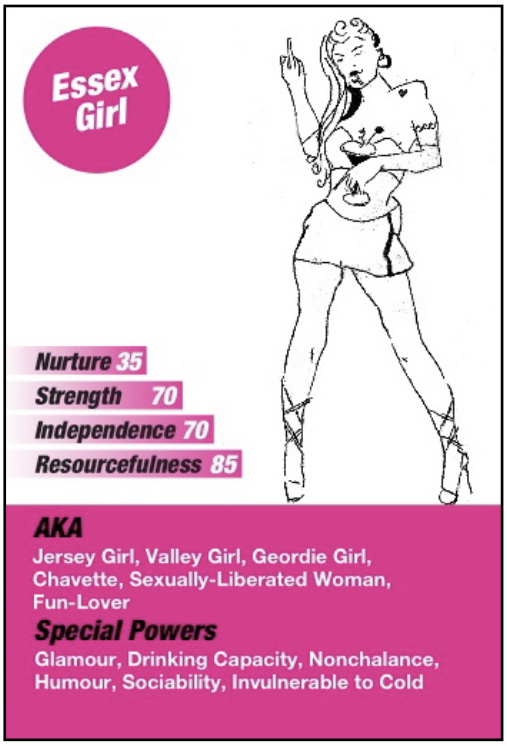
flying, practicing magic, and getting into trouble — much more exciting I thought!

Q: You put a huge amount of research into your books, and although names are often changed, the stories in your books are partially inspired by real-life history — do you already know the historical story you want to write about before you plot the rest of the novel?

Syd: My progress through the historical stories has always been organic. When I was writing *The Drowning Pool* — which took me seven years because I was working at the college and doing my Master of Arts degree in creative writing at the same time — I was interested in the real-life "sea witch" Sarah Moore (no relation), who I renamed Sarah Grey in the book.

I first heard about Sarah Moore when a pub with her name opened close to where I lived, so I wanted to learn more and found out about the legend. After that, I started doing research into her and asking at the local heritage center. I eventually found her burial registration at the records office. That gave me a concrete date to begin looking into her story.

When I first started researching Sarah, I found the statistic that between 1580 and 1690, there were 222 indictments for witchcraft in Hertford, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex, but in Essex there were 503. That really shocked me. Then I researched more and found Matthew Hopkins, who eventually became my story for *Witch Hunt*. And while I was learning about the Hopkins hysteria, I came across Ursula Kemp, who I decided to use for Strange Magic.



In 2011, Syd and artist Heidi Wigmore created the tongue-in-cheek card game Super Strumps to "celebrate women and the positive attributes of female stereotypes."

Originally, *Strange Magic* was called *The Skeleton Key*, but when my publisher Oneworld bought it, we altered the title because they wanted to turn it into a series. At that point, though, I was a bit witched out! So, for *Strange Sight*, I decided to change things up and write a story about a really nasty, malevolent ghost, because until then, all my ghosts had suffered some kind of injustice and ended up meaning well.

That led me to researching Elizabeth Brownrigg and finding out about her crimes and the cruelty she inflicted, how she would exploit the charges from the foundling hospital, and it occurred to me that this kind of trafficking, abuse, and injustice is still going on. When you look at witch hunts and hysteria and our fear of the Other, how we demonize certain people and exploit the most vulnerable, it's continuing right now, in the U.K., the U.S., and across the world.

In *Strange Fascination*, which I've just finished, I'm looking at the story of another witch who actually existed — Anne Hughes, who lived in Great Leighs in Essex — but I've taken her story and transplanted it to my fictional village of Adder's Fork. In Great Leighs, there's a pub called The Castle, and in the car park, there's a large boulder that's supposedly over Anne's grave — she was meant to be a terrible witch who brought chaos to the village and who was then hanged and burnt at the crossroads. A boulder was moved over her grave to prevent her from rising back up. But while I was investigating her, I uncovered documentation that shows she was actually acquitted!

Interestingly, the famous ghost hunter Harry Price was called into Great Leighs in 1944 because the Americans had taken over part of the pub, and they were trying to bring their lorries in. But they couldn't, because the boulder was in the way. When they moved it, they unleashed a whole slew of poltergeist activity. All these weird things apparently happened, including several sightings of the witch. It was even written about in national newspapers.

In *Strange Fascination*, I've also touched upon the idea of glamour, which I find really fascinating — how glamour (in a witchcraft sense) is all about artifice and dark deeds and linked to fairy magic. What irks me is how, in modern society, there are allusions via glamour to violence against women that are sexualized and celebrated and then positioned and marketed in such a way as to encourage women to aspire to them. It's madness.

And I see so many instances when glamour is linked to fire, which seems to me to be a kind of contemporary fetishizing of the European witch hunts. Representations of glamour regularly depict women surrounded by fire or smoke, wearing clothes that are golden, orange, flaming, etc. There's an expensive French perfume called La Fumee Intense (intense smoke) allegedly inspired by the ritual of burning, and other fragrances have names like

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White Fire, Fire Me Up, and Fire for Women. There's even a perfume called The Bewitching Yasmine that's got a cat on top of the bottle! Now that Christmas is coming, you'll see these images everywhere if you look for them.

My research into glamour has also meant I've been looking more closely at fairy myths, particularly stories about the "wild hunt," which is sometimes associated with the horned god Cernunnos, who was all about autumn and winter and harvesting until he was hijacked by the Christian church and turned into the devil!

Syd has worked extensively in publishing and the book trade and presented a late-night book program in the UK, called *Pulp*. (Photo by wwwdanielnewmanphotography.co.uk.)

Q: So, Rosie might be encountering fairies in *Strange Fascination*?

Syd: I don't want to give away any spoilers, but you never know what you'll find in Mab Wood, the forest in Adder's Fork!

Q: Is the research your favorite part of writing a book?

Syd: I kind of love it all really. I'm a very sociable person, so after spending days and days in my little box room not seeing anybody, doing the research gets me out and about talking to people. And it's really good for my personality.

It's also fantastic to go to these eerie places and learn more about them. Yesterday I was in Banbury looking at crusader tombs for book four. I love that part of it.

Q: Do you believe magic exists?

Syd: You mean, do I think people can really cast spells? It's difficult to reduce everything to a yes or no answer. I'm fully aware of where we are in our evolutionary history and that we don't know everything.

Someone once said to me that UFOs are from a different dimension, and I thought that was ridiculous. But now there's the whole superstring theory, which I find really fascinating — the possibility that we could be living in multiple dimensions. If you think of some kinds of magic as projecting your thoughts and your will, who knows if we're not accessing other dimensions that haven't even got a name yet?

I do think there's definitely something in the idea of zeitgeist and collective will, and I've always thought that whatever goes on in your brain isn't necessarily contained by your skull. I believe people can pick up on other people's thoughts, but perhaps we're just not encouraged to be open to them because of the way we're brought up and socialized.

There's undoubtedly a lot of trickery and showmanship that also goes on, but magic is such a wide term, and some parts of it do work. In *Strange Magic*, I mentioned the great witch's ritual that took place during the Second World War, the cone of power. The "Father of Wicca," Gerald Gardner, said he was there and that all these witches had convened. But other sources said they were actually a load of Canadian airmen dressed up in gowns with symbols from the Key of Solomon, going through the motions because they knew there were German agents watching who would feed the information back to Hitler. But the fact is that it did shake Hitler, and we believe he did call off some of his U-boats from approaching Britain, because he believed in the ceremony's power. So it did work; it did have the expected magical outcome, whether it was actually magic or not.

It's like my nan and the wart — that's an old wives' tale, and I was skeptical about it at the time, but it worked. So I'm sure there are lots of rational explanations for it, maybe a placebo effect, but my nan thought she was doing some kind of magical spell — and either way, the wart disappeared. Who are we to say it wasn't magic?

Ursula Kemp (or Ursula Cadence as I referred to her in *Strange Magic*) did spells that involved pig dung and stabbing a table and throwing stuff in the fire, but they also involved St. John's Wort and sage, and they worked. People came to her and believed she could do magic, because her spells and charms worked. So magic does exist.

Q: And what do you think about other aspects of the paranormal? Have you ever been on a paranormal investigation?

Syd: No, but I'd love to do an investigation, and I've done research with people who have. I'm sensitive to atmosphere — I think we all are — and I think there are places all over the world where you can sense something. Yesterday in

the church, when I was looking at the crusader tombs, the atmosphere was jangling, it didn't feel comfortable.

I'm kind of like Rosie in that I have an open mind and a healthy skepticism — well, actually Sam's more like that — but I think atheism is very arrogant and just as blinding as absolute faith. It's dangerous to close your mind to possible arguments about things that we haven't discovered yet.

As you move through life, you can't fail to notice that things aren't black and white; they're nuanced and lots of different shades of gray. When things become reductive and binary — like the witch hunts, the holocaust, and all the other terrible events that human beings have got involved with — it's extremely problematic. Unfortunately, I think we're there at the moment. Look at the most powerful man in the world; nuance is not a word you'd use to describe him.

> "People came to her and believed she could do magic, because her spells and charms worked. So magic does exist."

And also look at where we are in the U.K. with Brexit; it's another reductive and problematic place. Nuance, sophistication, intricacy, and complexity aren't things we should be afraid of.

On one hand, if people haven't had any experience of the paranormal, it's easier for them to say it hasn't happened. But some people are far more sensitive than others. My sister is quite often having paranormal experiences. I used one of them in *The Drowning Pool*.

My sister used to live in a little fisherman's cottage with her son, an ancient cottage in the old town in Leigh, and it had one of those really old staircases with a latched gate-like door at the bottom so that you can get into the lower part of the house. When her son was really little, she'd come downstairs and hear him on the other side of the door talking like he was on the telephone, and she'd ask him, "Are you on the phone to Grandma?" And he'd say, "No, I'm talking to Lily. But now you're here, she's gone."

So, my sister thought he had an imaginary friend, but she'd hear him talking all the time — like a one-sided conversation. This went on for about seven or eight months, and then Lily just started to disappear. Her visits became less and less frequent, and eventually her son stopped talking about her at all. A year later, there was a knock on my sister's door, and there were two old ladies outside who said they used to live in this house and would she mind if they popped inside to look around?

So, she showed them around the house and offered them a cup of tea, and one of the ladies suddenly got a bit weepy. "It brings back a lot of memories," she said. "Our little sister, Lily, died in this room when she was five." And that living room was the only place in the house where my sister's son and Lily had held their "conversations."

Q: Why is the appeal of witchcraft — in fact and in fiction — so enduring?

Syd: Personally, I think it's got the appeal of fantasy, the appeal that things aren't just mundane, and maybe the world is fucked, but maybe magic exists and you can change things and use your will to alter your situation and try to make the world a better place.

We are mammals, and we are part of the natural world, but we live in such a cyberage that we feel divorced from our natural environment. When we think about witchcraft and ritual, herbs, spells, and potions, they are all things that take us back to that natural environment; they reconnect us with our habitat.

I probably sound like a massive hippy now, but you can't look at the sea or go out into a wood at autumn and not be moved by the sights, smells, and sensations — or maybe some people can! — but I think a large part of the appeal of witchcraft is that it honors our sense of belonging to the planet.

Q: The first two Rosie Strange books have taken off tremendously well in both the U.K. and U.S. Why do you think they've connected with audiences so universally?

Syd: I'm not sure, although I'm delighted they have! My publisher sent me some reviews from the U.S., and they seem to quite like the idea of Essex — they have their own Essex over there, because Salem is in Essex County. And when I researched Matthew Hopkins for *Witch Hunt*, I discovered he had a brother who'd traveled to Massachusetts, which started me thinking — it was 30 years after Hopkins disappeared from Essex that the Salem witch hunts started in the U.S., so is it possible that the Witchfinder General sailed to America and covertly stirred things up?

We know that settlers from Essex went out there on the Mayflower — the Mayflower was built in Essex — and we definitely know that the book Hopkins wrote, *The Discovery of Witches*, was used in the Salem witch trials. So maybe that weird witchcraft connection has a little bit to do with it.

People also seem to quite like Rosie. She's very much a flawed heroine, but people tell me it's good to see a female working-class character, because they don't usually feature much in books these days. And they like the humor, as well as the scares. In my *Strange* world, I try never to absolutely resolve the supernatural phenomena. I always leave space for an "is it" or "isn't it," so there are

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always questions and uncertainties, and my readers can come down on either side.

But for me, there are definitely other forces at play in the writing that are helping to shape the characters better — Rosie and Sam's character arc is changing as we progress through the books, and thanks to her background as a Benefit Fraud inspector, Rosie is partly witchfinder and partly witch. It's fun to constantly play with Rosie's self-awareness, because although she's incredibly insightful and may possibly be developing powers that she doesn't think exist, she sometimes can't see things that are under her own nose!

I also think there are bits in the books that people can relate to wherever they live — moments that are universal, because they've happened to me, to you, to all of us, where you notice something out of the corner of your eye, but you're not sure if you've really seen it. Or when you have an odd experience but immediately try to find a rational way to explain it.

Q: Even though *Strange Sight* only takes place a few weeks after the events of *Strange Magic*, you can see the development in Rosie and Sam's relationship.

Syd: I'm glad you felt that. I like writing them and seeing how they react, and in *Strange Fascination*, you'll see their relationship develop even further. There's that writer's cliché where you tell the characters what to do, but then they react in a completely different way to what you were expecting.

With Rosie, I picture her in my head, and I just watch and listen — I'll see Rosie kick something over and walk off, and Sam roll his eyes. They develop a mind of their own, and sometimes I think I'm a bit of a channel for them.

David Bowie died while I was writing *Strange Magic*, and I was listening to a lot of his songs. I kept coming back to *Changes*. I think the line, "Turn and face the strange" influenced me a fair bit. But there was so much in that song that jumped out as a perfect soundtrack for the *Strange* trilogy. (Well, it was the *Strange* trilogy then, but now there's lots more to come!)

I knew I wanted the third book to be titled *Strange Fascination*, and that was also because of, amongst other things, the line, "Strange fascination fascinating me," which, I felt, resonated with the themes of the unexplored, the paranormal, and the mysterious.

I knew Rosie was going to become initially involved with those forces with great reluctance but that her relationship with the external world and the nebulous would change her. I guess I wanted to say that it's OK to be awed and floored and to live in a world where not everything has an answer like they tell you it does at school. Wonder is a beautiful thing.

Q: And, while we're on the subject of wonder, are there any other subjects or stories that you'd like to investigate in the future?

Syd: Well, I'm going to be busy with Rosie and Sam for a while — I've only just started researching the fourth book, and there'll be at least two more books after that — but although I don't think I could cover this subject in the *Strange* series, I'm really intrigued by "Doggerland."

Doggerland goes back to about 6000 BC when Essex and the East of England used to be joined to Denmark and Germany by a land bridge, so there were trade routes from Essex to the Continent until the ice shelves fell and the sea swept in and separated us. In fact, the River Thames used to be a tributary of the Rhine.

But Doggerland — the land bridge — was inhabited, and in the Thames Estuary, they have dredged up a lot of amazing Mesolithic artefacts that suggest the tribes who lived there were practicing magic and ritual. I'm quite interested in exploring that.

I'm also interested in tides being the markers of time, time being non-linear, and the big idea about how we are still creatures of the sea in many ways. Women especially are governed by the moon and the tides, the lunar cycles, and our whole world is linked to the water. We are just sea creatures who learned to walk on land.

Q: Who are the writers you admire?

Syd: Oh there are so many. I'm sort of an omnivore where reading is concerned! MR James, Charlaine Harris — I love her *Grave Secrets* series. Wilkie Collins. I really like Daphne Du Maurier's dark macabre tales. When I was younger, I loved Robert Goddard and *Past Caring*, which was a bit off the wall. And I can't forget my friend Cathi Unsworth, whose work is great.

I'm currently reading and enjoying a lot of Dennis Wheatley. He's really snobby, sexist, and racist, but he's an interesting guy who sold absolute shit loads of books and had the finest wine cellar in Europe — it's hard to argue with that! I should name-check Adam Nevill as well. He's a really good contemporary horror writer, and his book *The Ritual* is especially excellent. Very different but quite nasty.

> "I'M ALSO INTERESTED IN TIDES BEING THE MARKERS OF TIME, TIME BEING NON-LINEAR, AND THE BIG IDEA ABOUT HOW WE ARE STILL CREATURES OF THE SEA IN MANY WAYS."

Q: Finally, what would you like readers to take away from reading your books?

Syd: I want my readers to have fun and enjoy a good story and feel thrilled, have flutters of fright, but also to have a bit of a laugh as well, to like the characters and experience their warmth and to know that there is fun and laughter to be had in life, as well as grimness and nastiness.

I'd also hope that people might be encouraged to look back at history and realize that it's important to learn and grow from the events of the past and sometimes change our behavior so the same awful mistakes aren't repeated. Right now, I don't believe people are doing that, and we ignore the lessons of history at our peril.

But the short answer to your question? I want to bring all of those elements together so I can talk about things that are important to me, and en route I also want to give everybody a bloody good time!

* * * * *

"Strange Magic," "Strange Sight," "The Drowning Pool," and "Witch Hunt" are available on Amazon and at all good booksellers. "Strange Fascination" is scheduled for publication June 12, 2018. You can follow Syd Moore on social media at https://twitter.com/SydMoore1 and https://www.facebook.com/SydMooreWriter/. ◆

TOMBALL, TEXAS: SMALL TOWN WITH BIG HAUNTS

By Mike Baxter, TomballTX.gov

By day, Old Town Tomball, 28 miles northwest of Houston, Texas, is filled with eclectic antique and specialty shops, award-winning mom-and-pop eateries, live entertainment, festivals, and a quality of life that makes living in a small town very desirable.

But, late at night when the moon is high and the streets are empty, Tomball, Texas, is said to host a different sort of night life — a "spirited" night life filled with unexplained incidents involving things that go bump in the night. You see, Tomball is said to be the small town with the big haunts.

The Alley Ghost of Elm Street

Along the railroad tracks on North Elm Street is Tomball's newest award-winning spot for craft barbecue and handmade chocolate to die for. Tejas Chocolate + Barbecue is set in what many old-timers say is the oldest house in town ... so, what better place to find a resident spirit with a love of barbecue and sweets?

Recently named the #6 Barbecue Joint in Texas by *Texas Monthly Magazine*, Tejas is one of the town's hot spots for "unexplained late night groans and the sound of footsteps in the attic and on the staircase," said co-owner Scott Moore, Jr. "When we moved into the building, it got my attention real fast!" he said.

Moore said that he had heard tales from neighboring shop owners about a ghost named Travis who wanders the alley behind his shop at night. "We were working late one evening, and our back alley gate opened and then slammed shut," he said. "There was no one in the alley and no breeze whatsoever. It was unnerving."

Two years after opening the restaurant, Moore and his coworkers at Tejas Chocolate + Barbecue still freely talk about hearing noises upstairs after hours, pans and boxes falling from level shelves as if pushed by an unseen visitor, and the light at the top of the narrow stairway to the second floor that is switched off in the morning even though they know it was left on when they locked up the night before.

The paranormal activity that has occurred in this two-story home in Tomball, Texas, has caused it's landlord to put a special clause in the lease agreement for renters: "Paranormal activity is not grounds for terminating the lease contract."

Moore sees Travis as more of a prankster, but, "sometimes it gets borderline uncomfortable being alone here," he said. "I've never experienced the weird things that happen here anywhere else I've ever worked or lived."

Similar stories were told by the developer during the renovation of the old house on North Elm Street. Re-

modelers regularly heard the sound of someone walking in the attic, tools left in one room would later turn up in another, and then there was the constant uneasy feeling of being watched when alone in the building. Even today, the original air-conditioning contractor that did work in the attic during remodeling refuses to go back into the space for follow-up projects.

Moore has jokingly accepted his wayward guest as possibly an impatient railroad passenger who continues to miss the ghost train that sometimes rolls down the nearby BNSF railroad tracks causing the crossing arms to lower on Main Street for no apparent reason.

When Travis isn't making mischief at Tejas, he's making himself known next door at Jane & John Dough Bakery. In an old house built in 1936, the eclectic coffee house is filled with energy, according to co-owner Jane Wild. "You can feel it all around," she said.

Co-owner John Blankemeyer agrees, adding that the energy is strongest in the hallway leading from the kitchen to the main dining room. "When you pass through the hallway, you get the feeling you're being watched," he said.

Like his friends at Tejas Chocolate + Barbecue, Blankemeyer believes that Travis is a joker. Things go missing only to show up elsewhere, there will be knocking on the kitchen door as if someone wants to come in when there is no one on the other side, and the occasional voices and shout-outs are reminders that they are sharing space with an unseen guest. But, it was the first encounter with Travis that was the most memorable.

"During construction, we had a row of trash bags filled with debris stacked against a wall. There was also a piece of wood, a wall stud, leaning against the same wall behind the bags," said Blankemeyer. "As two of us watched, the stud didn't just fall over the bags. It leaped over them and landed flat on the floor. The two of us just looked at each other, like 'what just happened?' Now we realize that it must have been Travis."

Pictured above: Michelle Holland of Tejas Chocolate + Barbecue at the foot of the stairway leading to the haunted attic/office.

Granny's Ghost

The mischievous spirit at Granny's Korner across from the historic Tomball Depot has been named Gertie by shop owner Mary Harvey. For years, the sprawling antique and gift shop on Market Street has experienced unexplained voices and activities both day and night.

"I'm sure that there's a ghost here. Customers have even commented on it too" said Harvey. "Gertie slams doors, causes things to fall, makes all sorts of noises, and has even touched people as they shop. We all know that when the festivals start happening there at the old Depot, it disturbs Gertie and she shows her presence," said Harvey.

A City of Tomball employee reported hearing a loud banging sound coming from Granny's Korner one morning while setting up for a festival before dawn. The erratic sound was as if someone was inside pounding against the old shop windows facing Market Street in order to get the employee's attention. As the employee walked away from the area, the sound immediately stopped.

Feeling a presence is one thing, but actually coming face to face with Gertie in the shop one day was all the proof Harvey would ever need to become a believer. "I was in a hurry and walked around a wall and nearly ran over her," she said. "Thinking it was a customer, I put my hand up to keep from bumping into her. That's when she just disappeared."

Harvey said that she was so surprised to see the ghost that all she can remember is that Gertie was about 5'3" tall

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and had long hair. "We'd heard that there was possibly a cemetery here at one time, and there was a jail nearby for many years," said Harvey. "I've also been told that many years ago a woman was stabbed to death in what's now the courtyard of our shop."

A summertime thunder storm in Tomball earlier this year didn't sit well with Gertie, according to Harvey. "The thunder and lightning was incredible during the night," she said. "When we opened the shop the next morning it was a mess. There were picture frames and all sorts of things everywhere on the floor."

Despite lights and ceiling fans that turn on and off by themselves, the thermostat that won't stay put, the hotel style bell on the front counter that "dings" when no one is there, and merchandise that relocates on its own, the ladies who work at Granny's Korner have accepted Gertie and hope that she will someday accept them.

A mischievous spirit at Granny's Korner has been named Gertie by shop owner Mary Harvey. For years, the sprawling antique and gift shop has experienced unexplained voices and activities both day and night.

"We've learned to deal with her," said Harvey. "We're not scared of her and actually enjoy talking to her and having her around. In fact, I had a ghost expert tell me that Gertie is my protector and that she sometimes travels with me."

The Museum Mystery

Nestled among the giant oaks on North Pine Street just off of Main is the popular Tomball Museum Center with its collection of historic homes, a one-room school house, church, farm museum, and more.

One of the old homes there is the Griffin House, constructed in the early 1860s by renowned builder Eugene Pillot. This beautifully restored example of Civil War-era architecture comes complete with a bonus ... its own apparition in the attic. According to Museum Director Charles Hall, stories of a female spirit in the Griffin House have circulated for years. As the story goes, the figure of a woman dressed in period clothing has appeared in the upper reaches of the home and been seen more than once rocking quietly back and forth in her rocking chair in the parlor on the main floor.

The ghost is thought to be the 21-year-old daughter of the Faris family who once lived in the home. The mysterious cause of the young woman's death remains unknown.

Spring Creek Specters

During the Civil War, a Confederate powder mill sat in what is now Spring Creek Park, just a short drive from downtown Tomball. It was there Texans loyal to the Confederacy worked around the clock making cannon powder for the rebel army's artillery pieces.

In 1864, a horrific explosion destroyed the facility, killing three men working there. The force of the blast was so great that a huge crater was created that over time filled with water and became a popular swimming hole for locals.

Despite rumors of spirits at the pond and in the surrounding woods, the lure of the cool, dark water continued to draw swimmers to the powder mill site willing to risk a ghostly encounter for a quick dip. Unfortunately, for some, that decision ended in their death. After several curious drownings, the powder mill pond was fenced, but the rumors remain even today.

A paranormal investigation was conducted at Spring Creek Park in 2008 with results showing evidence of unexplained responses, shadowy images and psychic impressions. Could these have been the spirits of deceased soldiers of the Confederacy, drowning victims, or possibly both?

Phantom of Fannin Street

The turreted two-story home at the corner of South Walnut Street and Fannin doesn't fit the image of a Victorian style "haunted house," but years of alleged paranormal activities inside have forced the landlord to include a special clause in the lease agreement for renters.

"My lease reads that paranormal activity is not grounds for terminating the lease contract," said current resident Rocky Pilgrim.

Pilgrim, a local attorney, had heard the stories of the house before moving in but was skeptical; that is until

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things began to happen that she couldn't logically explain. "As the story goes, two spinsters lived in the house alone, and for whatever reason one of them hanged herself from a beam in the second floor loft," she said.

Former residents have told tales of children at play upstairs hearing voices telling them to "Get out" and "Leave ... I don't like you." On more than one occasion, vases, stacks of paper, and other inanimate objects have been known to migrate from one space to another within the house when no one was watching.

A shower mysteriously turned itself on full force, seconds after a resident exited to dry off, and glowing orbs have been photographed around the property by the occasional ghost tour, according to Pilgrim.

A recent incident involved a young woman playing her piano alone in the home as she does every evening.

The Griffin House at the Tomball Museum Center is said to be home to a female spirit. The figure of a woman dressed in period clothing has been spotted from time to time.

Through her peripheral vision while playing, the woman thought she saw a shadow moving to her side, but when she turned to look, it was gone.

Again she started to play, and again she saw the shadowy figure moving to her side only to disappear when she turned to face it. It happened a third time with the same outcome.

The pianist then closed her eyes and continued to play her tune when, suddenly, she felt someone or something grip her shoulders from behind in what was described as a light, unaggressive hold. She stopped playing and the grip was released.

"I have never been creeped-out living here," said Pilgrim. "Maybe it's because I'm still skeptical and few things have actually happened to me ... it usually just happens around me. I guess I prefer to remain in ignorance, and it's worked pretty well so far."

A Team Effort

The Tomball Emergency Assistance Ministries, or TEAM, sits quietly on Main Street, providing help to those in need throughout the day. But, after dark, this onetime doctor's office and grocery store is known for "clients" of another kind.

"I had been working here for about a year before I was told about strange happenings after dark," said Becky Loving, director of TEAM. "Strange things were experienced by our volunteers, staff, and even my husband."

She continued: "Every night before we lock up, we straighten our resale area. Books and toys in the children's area are put back onto the shelves. But, there have been times when we return in the morning to find those same books and toys arranged in a perfect circle on the floor that had been cleaned the night before."

There is one story from 2011 of a warehouse employee who saw the vision of a small-framed woman walking through the resale shop after dark plainly dressed as if from the 1950s. The employee rushed into the back of the building and returned with two coworkers who also saw the vision. Within seconds, the mysterious woman vanished as they looked on.

Loving's husband was working alone in the kitchen area of TEAM one night, when the kitchen faucet turned on by itself. Later that week, a faucet in a nearby restroom did the same thing as someone was answering nature's call.

"There is a video of a plate flying off a shelf as if thrown just as one of our customers passed by," Loving said. "And the same thing has happened off camera involving volunteers."

And, then there are the stories of footprints on freshly mopped floors when only the custodian was present in the building, she added.

From its haunted homes, to spirited shops and shadow-filled cemeteries, Tomball is "Texan for Fun"® in this life and apparently in the next!

For more information about Tomball, Texas, call 281-351-5484, visit http://tomballtx.gov/, or "like" Tomball on Facebook at "Tomball Texan for Fun." ◆

New from *Paranormal Underground* columnist

Karen Frazier

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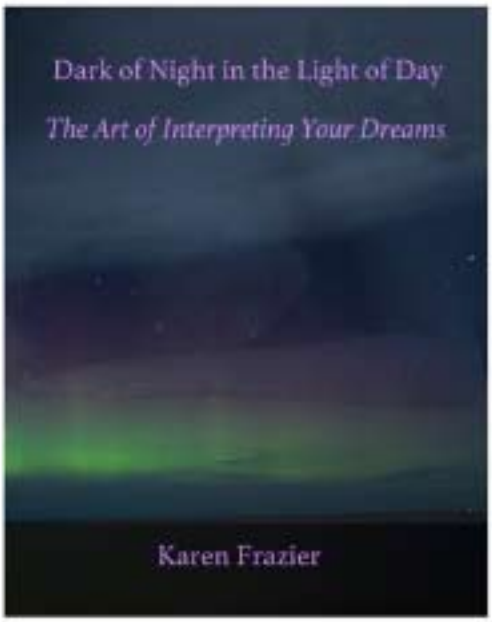

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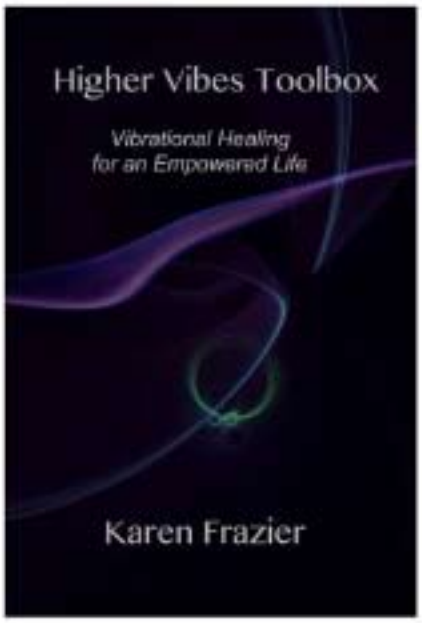

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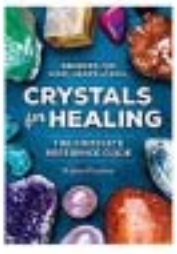

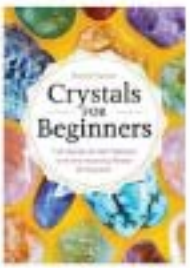

AuthorKarenFrazier.com

MIAMI POLTERGEIST: Sun, Surf, Terror

By Rick E. Hale

Ah, the great state of Florida. Land of sun and sand and home to a giant mutant mouse practically worshipped as a god. For countless years, Florida has attracted millions of vacationing families from around the world. And while Florida is known for many wonderful things, it is home to a lesser known and yet incredibly important poltergeist case.

Miami, Florida, like any other touristy type town and city is littered with souvenir shops. You know, those stores where you can buy an alligator-shaped ashtray or a T-shirt that reads, "My parents went to Florida, and all I got was this stupid shirt." Seriously, they're everywhere. And they will separate you from your money faster than that giant rodent and his magical kingdom. But, I digress.

Miami circa 1967 was home to many of these kitschy novelty shops, and one of the biggest ones was Tropication Arts. Fine purveyors of ephemera that gets stuffed away in your attic two weeks after getting home from your vacation. However, in 1967, Tropication Arts was experiencing strange, frustrating problems that seemed to go against the very laws of nature. Strange problems of the supernatural kind.

When the activity began, the supernatural was the furthest thing from anyone's mind. Management came to the conclusion that the broken product found shattered on the floor could only be caused by butter-fingered employees, or it was being done intentionally by an employee who would soon find themselves without a job. So, the owners called the local police who set up a sting operation to find the miscreants responsible. They soon discovered that no human hand was at work.

When the investigation turned up nothing, the management began to fear that maybe they had a ghost in the warehouse. And that assumption was confirmed when several employees and Miami's boys in blue claimed to watch as inventory lifted off the shelves by unseen hands and dashed to the warehouse floor. Faced with the sheer strangeness of the goings on in their warehouse, management did something you should never do in a situation like this; they contacted the media.

Needless to say, the media ate it up. Soon Tropication Arts got the reputation as being haunted. Thankfully, the story caught the eyes of two parapsychologists, William Roll and JG Pratt.

Roll and Pratt were at the top of their game. Both men were respected by the mainstream scientific community for their skeptical approach to the paranormal. If anyone could get to the bottom of the activity at Tropication Arts, it was them.

When Roll and Pratt arrived at the souvenir ware-

house, they immediately went about the business of interviewing eyewitnesses and investigating. They did not believe for one second that some vengeful spirit was taking its anger out on the souvenirs. Rather, they believed that if something strange was going on, it would undoubtedly be the work of Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis (RSPK) or a poltergeist. If this were true, who was the focus?

As they investigated, a pattern began to emerge. The activity only seemed to occur when Julio Vasquez, a 19-year-old Cuban refugee was present. After doing some digging, they made a few discoveries about Julio that only confirmed their suspicions. Vasquez reportedly had a horrible relationship with his family, had problems with depression, and even survived a suicide attempt. And to top it off, Julio hated his job. Roll and Pratt were convinced they had their man.

When the parapsychologists presented their finding to the owners of Tropication Arts, they did what any caring boss would do. They immediately fired him on the spot and had him brought up on charges of theft and property damage. And why you may ask. Because it was Miami in 1967, and Cuban refugees were not exactly liked by most Floridians.

But, were Roll and Pratt right about Julio Vasquez? It would seem so. Almost immediately the activity ceased at the souvenir warehouse.

The Miami poltergeist case, as it is known in the annals of psychical research, is an important case. It busted the notion that only prepubescent girls were the unwitting culprits behind RSPK.

The case showed that if conditions are just right, anyone could display this violent, uncontrollable psychic force.◆

Winter Balefire
Love Letters Destroyed
Love Letters Destroyed is Winter Balefire's first book of poetry now available at Amazon, Lulu, Barnes & Noble and all fine retailers that sell great books. Pick it up in eBook and signed paperback editions today!
Love Letters Destroyed is a collection of poetry representing all that is written and left unsaid. Sleepless nights, dark thoughts, and broken bits of sanity fill these pages. Each piece tells a story and each story will reveal every part of your psyche you've hidden from. Here you will find everything you've ever felt but have never said aloud.

The Continuing Religious/UFO Odyssey of Dr. Barry Downing

By Sean Casteel, SpectralVision.wordpress.com

Science and religion could end up complementing each other. New, more radical trends in physics point to the existence of parallel universes and other dimensions, which could assist in explaining many biblical mysteries and miracles, at least according to one Protestant minister who has spent a half century pondering the reality of UFOs and extraterrestrials and their possible connection to the seemingly bizarre and unexplainable tales of the *Old* and *New Testaments*.

Reverend Barry Downing, who resides in upstate New York, was among the first to see that it wasn't a given that the "good book" was in conflict with the lore of the flying saucer and the possibility that our universe might be constructed of a bit more than just physical matter. He posited that heaven could be a real place — if not in our timeline, then perhaps in a parallel existence just beyond our reach.

Could that other dimension possibly be accessible through the guidance of godly ultra-terrestrial beings and their vehicles? What we think of as spaceships could, in some cases, be divine.

Reverend Barry H. Downing is not just an ordained minister and a religious expert; he is also well-versed in physics, having earned his bachelor's degree in the field.

Downing has been preaching the gospel of "UFO angels" for nearly 50 years now since the publication of his 1968 book, *The Bible and Flying Saucers*. Downing has recently released a new book called *Biblical UFO Revelations* that incorporates hard-won wisdom and perspectives gleaned in the intervening years as he steadfastly continues to make his case for his particular take on Christianity and the aliens.

Downing is not just an ordained minister and a religious expert; he is also well-versed in physics, having earned his bachelor's degree in the field. So he is uniquely qualified to analyze biblical miracles, like the parting of the Red Sea from the Exodus, both scientifically and as a man of faith. Read more about the "environmental impact" that the pillar of cloud and fire exerted for the sake of the fleeing Israelites.

How does one approach the extreme levels of fear experienced by witnesses to angels in the *Bible*? Is the fear a UFO witness experiences an example of that same kind of fear? Are we actually wise to approach the two phenomena in abject terror and trembling? At what point does a heavenly love enter the picture and cast out all fear?

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I was on the air this past summer with Timothy Green Beckley and Tim Swartz, the hosts of the KCOR podcast "Exploring the Bizarre," with their special guest — yes, you guessed it — Reverend Downing. In a commercial break, during which we all chatted but the audience could not hear us, Downing informed us that he had sufficient new material for a physical/print book.

Thinking quickly on his feet, Tim Beckley wasted no time in offering to publish Downing's more recent writings through Beckley's company Global Communications/Inner Light. And so the process began for *Biblical UFO Revelations*, a book that is a long overdue reprise from an important pioneer in the ancient aliens school of UFO interpretation.

Downing made his initial entry into the UFO community in 1968 with his groundbreaking tome *The Bible and Flying Saucers*. The book explored the possibility of extraterrestrial influence in the development of the *Old* and *New Testaments*, with particular emphasis on the notion that one can equate the "angels" of the *Bible* with the "aliens" of our modern era. Which, at the time, was fairly new and unfamiliar territory for the relatively young field of UFO research.

Before writing that first book, Downing had already earned a Ph.D. from the University of Edinburg in Scotland. His dissertation, called "Eschatological Implications of the Understanding of Time and Space in the Thought of Isaac Newton," combined the religious, the philosophical, and the scientific into the kind of whole that would serve Downing well in his years spent researching and writing about UFOs.

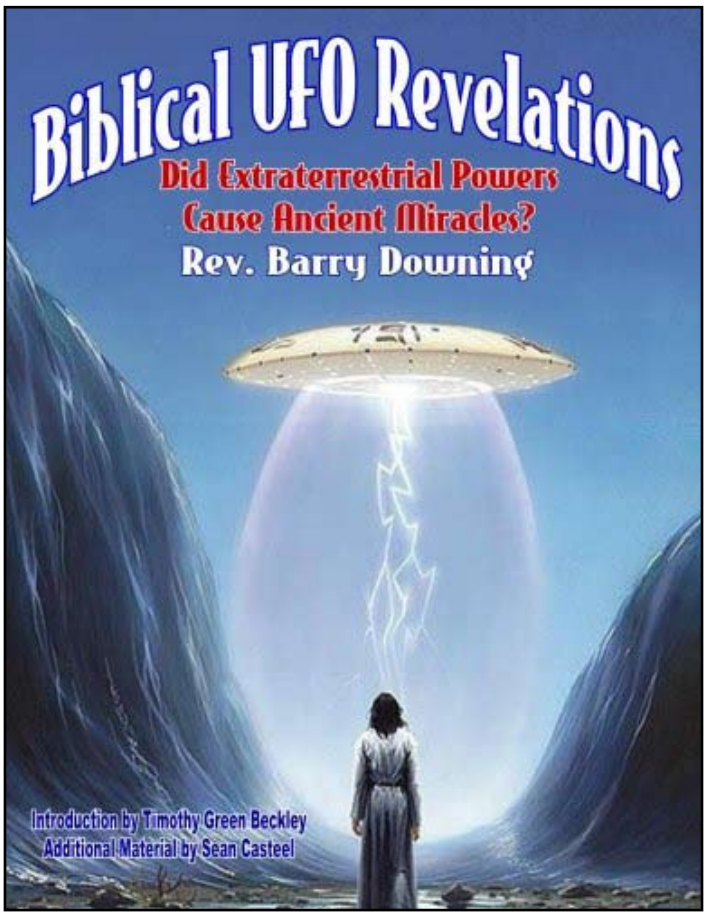
When Downing returned from Scotland in May 1966, he set up shop in his in-laws' basement and wrote his book while he awaited his first church assignment as a newly ordained minister. He finished the writing one week before taking a job at the Northminster Presbyterian Church in Endwell, New York, in February 1967, and the book came out the following year.

"I was hopeful that conservative Christians would be more positive than liberal Christians," Downing told me by email. "It turned out to be the case that neither liberals nor conservatives liked my book. So in a sense I was treated 'fairly' by both sides."

The 'Environmental Impact' of a UFO

The parting of the Red Sea is particularly interesting to Downing, and he gives it 20 pages of examination in *The Bible and Flying Saucers* and devotes a chapter to it in the new book, *Biblical UFO Revelations*.

"My argument is that the Exodus UFO, the pillar of cloud and fire," he explained, "which appeared cloud-like during the day and glowed in the dark, used its propulsion system to split the waters of the Red Sea and save Israel from the Egyptians. The reason the parting of the Red Sea is so important is that it tells us in detail the environmental impact of the UFO presence. Modern researchers go to landing spots with Geiger counters and all kinds of equipment in order to study the environmental impact of


Biblical UFO Revelations
Did Extraterrestrial Powers Cause Ancient Miracles?
Rev. Barry Downing
Introduction by Timothy Green Beckley
Additional Material by Sean Casteel

Biblical UFO Revelations **by Reverend Barry Downing explores the possibility of extraterrestrial influence in the development of the *Old* and *New Testaments*, with particular emphasis on the notion that one can equate the "angels" of the *Bible* with the "aliens" of our modern era.**

a flying saucer landing. Exodus 14:19-30 is a very detailed environmental impact statement."

Downing said he differs from the standard biblical interpretation that a "strong wind" was used to part the sea, because a wind strong enough to do that would also have blown Moses and the Israelites into the sky. The biblical text says the ground was dry when the Israelites crossed over, but since the escape was taking place at night, it could not have been dried by the sun. Downing suggests that some kind of microwave effect may have been involved.

"I believe the best explanation for the parting of the Red Sea," he said, "is that the pillar of cloud and fire was some type of spaceship, and those in charge of the spaceship planned the parting of the sea well in advance, to save Israel from the Egyptians and to keep Israel from going back to Egypt, once the Jews discovered that the whole Exodus process was not a walk in the park."

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Did an extraterrestrial spaceship use its propulsion system to part the waters of the Red Sea?

The New Physics: What the Years Have Taught Downing

Downing has kept up with the worlds of ufology and physics. His bachelor's degree is in physics, which he earned while on scholarship at Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York.

"When I published *The Bible and Flying Saucers* in 1968," Downing writes in *Biblical UFO Revelations*, "I had one major concern about connecting UFOs to biblical angels. The biblical view of angels was they were eternal beings; they had eternal life. My understanding of the scientific worldview at that time was that we live in a 'running-down universe,' meaning that at some time in the future, the Universe will run out of energy and die. If this were true, then no one living in this universe could be eternal.

"I began to explore the possibility," he continues, "that there might be more than one universe, that there might be a way to escape from the space-time continuum of our universe into a world that did not decay, did not run down. I thought Einstein's Theory of Relativity offered us the freedom to explore some possibilities within the framework of the as yet unfinished science of advanced physics. With that in mind, I began to look at the *New Testament* ideas of the angelic world, looking for 'some way out' of our universe, and looked for the possibility that UFOs did not come from our universe, but rather from another dimension."

These ideas are a large part of chapter five of the first book. Downing's optimistic search for a dimension that is truly eternal was met by the typical scorn his work receives from mainstream Christianity.

"The *Christianity Today* review of my book," Downing writes, "was predictably negative about chapter five."

Space does not permit a complete account of the scientific distortions contained in the book. In the preface, Downing states that he is not an authority on Einstein or on heaven. This does not deter him, however, from devoting a chapter to the question, "Where is heaven?" He admits that his discussion reads very much like science fiction and is not necessarily true, but it may, he says,

UFOs appear in the sky in many religious frescos — they seem to symbolize it as representative of "the others" in our skies.

"help to set our minds free from the somewhat depressing agnosticism we now find ourselves in when we even begin to entertain the idea that we might live eternally — as part of God's plan." He then proceeds, with complete abandon, to do violence to both Einstein and heaven with over 20 pages of pure speculation.

(The review, which was published in the June 21, 1968, issue of *Christianity Today*, was written by Albert L. Hedrich and entitled "Flying Saucers in the Bible?")

In that same section of *Biblical UFO Revelations*, Downing summarizes the liberal and conservative objections to his work.

"Liberals do not want me to take stories like the parting of the Red Sea literally," Downing writes. "They want it to be poetry, mythology. They want to keep science out of the *Bible*. Religion is not about reality. It is about something that we make up in our heads, much like music and poetry. Religion may have a beauty about it, it may represent human psychological longings, but it has nothing to do with the physical world.

"The issue with conservatives is quite different," he goes on. "It has been around 50 years since the publication of my book, and I still can't understand the conservative attack on my work. The conservative Christian mentality seems to be this: The church is a fort, the fort protects the basic treasure we have, which is the gospel, and the task of Christians is to attack all enemies who are trying to destroy the fort. They might be atheists (or other non-Christian religions, New Age mysticism, etc.), or they might be false prophets, or, as Gary Bates says of me, 'former believers who have fallen away.' Within this assumption, everyone has to be tested to see if he or she is a true believer or an enemy."

Downing says it is obvious that the point of view of people like Hedrich is that Downing is the enemy, having done violence to both Einstein and heaven. Downing's speculation amounts to bombs being dropped on the Christian fort.

"Does Hedrich know where heaven is?" Downing asks. "If he does, he does not tell us in his review. Apparently, he thinks it is sinful even to wonder about it. Since when is being full of wonder a sin? Since when is it a sin to believe that 'with God all things are possible?'" (Matthew 19:26)

The church is not a fort built to defend the gospel, according to Downing. God himself is our fort. We are not called to live in a fort; we are called to live in the wilderness with God, on a journey where we are moving toward the kingdom of God.

"If you hole up in a fort, you will not arrive at the kingdom of heaven," Downing cautions. "The incarnation of Christ means this journey through the wilderness is so important to God that God became human in Jesus, and lived, and died, on the journey with us. On this trip, we look for signs of buried treasure." (Matthew 13:44)

The UFO Phenomenon as 'Buried Treasure'

For around 50 years now, Downing has been pointing at UFOs and saying, "This may be buried treasure hidden for us to find."

The UFOs are not buried in dirt, of course.

"They're buried by the greed and lust for power of the military-industrial complex," he writes, "which decided years ago that UFO truth needed to be kept from us. Our modern pharaohs are no different from the pharaoh who challenged the God of Moses. I suspect that many world

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leaders did not want us to even think about the possibility that the angels of God are not only watching us, but are, on occasion, shutting down our nuclear missile sites.

"And I suspect that for many conservative Christians, defending fortress America and fortress Gospel are so similar, that seeing UFOs as demons, rather than angels, enemies of both America's military power, and enemies of the Gospel, was a very natural way to interpret the UFO mystery," he continues. "This is my best understanding of why I am not only the enemy of liberal Protestants, but also conservative Protestants. By and large, it is Roman Catholics who have not demonized me."

Downing also commented on the abduction experiences of Betty Andreasson Luca and Whitley Strieber, calling their stories "mini forms of disclosure."

The Role Fear Plays in the UFO Drama

When I interviewed Downing by email for an introduction to *Biblical UFO Revelations*, I asked him about how fear often plays a major role in the UFO drama, especially in terms of the alien abduction experience.

"We are inclined to think fear is a bad thing," he replied, "and in a sense it is. If God in His essence is love, then 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.' (1 John 4:18) At the same time, we are called, according to Paul, 'to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.' (Philippians 2:12) The biblical view is, the closer we come to knowing God's love, the less we will fear. Nevertheless, inclined as we are to sin, to pride, to jealousy, we need to live our lives in fear and trembling, aware that we are never more than a bad thought away from offending God and hurting the divine love bond.

"Fear is very much a dimension of our modern UFO story," he continued. "One reason for governments of the world keeping UFO information secret is that release of the information would lead to panic, the stock market would crash, the world economy would be destroyed."

Downing also offered an interesting analogy.

"If a stranger walks into my house and points a gun at me, fear will be my response, and it is a very appropriate response. I may die if I do not fear the intruder; I may die even if I do fear the intruder. But fear in this situation gives me a survival edge, a better chance of not being killed. I will treat the stranger with the gun with respect. The basic idea of God is that He is the one with the gun. He has the power to take our life, or save it, even to raise us from the dead. So fear of God as a sign of respect is an appropriate response."

When the angels appeared to the shepherds in the fields, Downing said, fear was the understandable response of the shepherds. "The angel said to the shepherds, 'Be not afraid, for behold, I bring you news of great joy.' (Luke 2:10) Fear of angels when they appear is a frequent response reported in the *Bible*. An angel of God descended from the sky and rolled back the tomb where Jesus was buried. 'And for fear of him, the guards trembled and became like dead men.' (Matthew 28:4)

"Whenever we meet a strange power greater than ourselves, fear is a natural response. It is a frequent response for by those who have a UFO encounter, or have an abduction experience, or have a bedroom visitation from an alien. Fear of aliens is no more proof they are evil than fear of angels proves THEY are evil."

Downing also commented on the abduction experiences of Betty Andreasson Luca and Whitley Strieber, calling their stories "mini forms of disclosure."

"They are not disclosure at a political level," Downing said, "that is, landing on the White House lawn and saying 'Take me to your leader.' But modern UFO abductions are a limited form of disclosure, examples of what I call 'targeted intervention.' The Second Coming of Christ, according to Christian hope, would be a form of an angelic army invasion. At the same time, the biblical story of the angel at the tomb of Jesus, or the conversion of the Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, represent forms of 'targeted intervention.'

"The story of the Jewish Exodus from Egypt seems to be something like a major invasion," he continued, "but the 'pillar of cloud and fire' keeps its distance from both pharaoh and the Jewish people. And the Jewish story has spiritual and moral power in human culture to this day — proof that targeted intervention can have consequences for human culture for thousands of years.

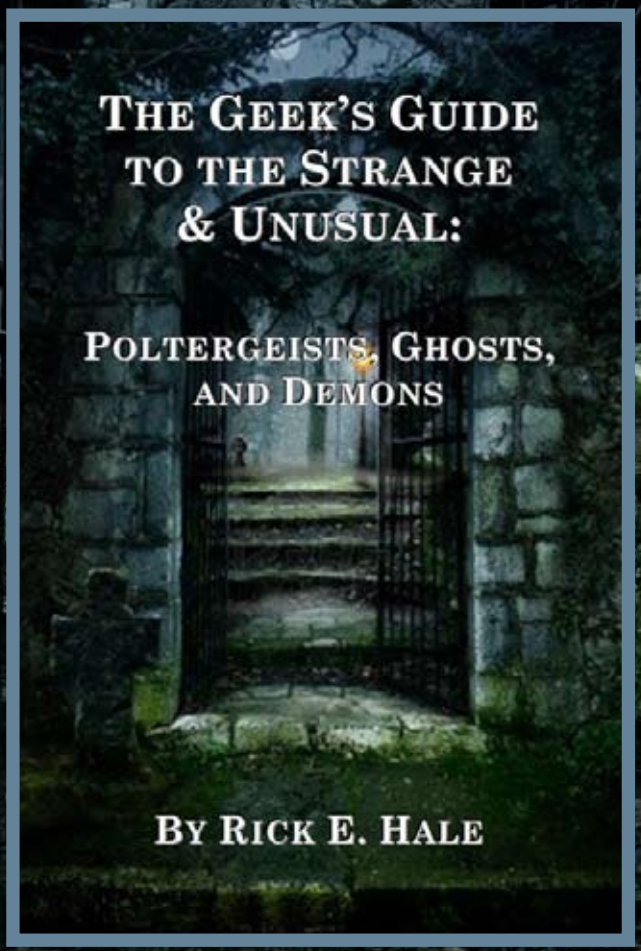
"The work of the pillar of cloud and fire during the Exodus should make us aware that, even if modern UFOs are working for our good, they represent a power of judgment over us such that 'fear and trembling' may be a very wise response to the UFO presence," Downing concludes.

SUGGESTED READING:

- *Biblical UFO Revelations* by Dr. Barry Downing
- *UFOs, Prophecy and the End of Time* by Sean Casteel
- *Signs and Symbols of the Second Coming* by Sean Casteel
- *The Excluded Books of the Bible* by Sean Casteel
- *UFOs: Are They Your Passport to Heaven?* by Diane Tessman and Timothy Beckley ◆

The Geek's Guide to the Strange & Unusual: Poltergeists, Ghosts, and Demons

Rick E. Hale's book about unexplainable paranormal phenomena explores many of the world's most intriguing paranormal cases and haunted locations, including the Demon Drummer of Tedworth, Lucedio Abbey, the Dagg poltergeist, and three cases of possession, among many others.



Book Now Available Online at Amazon.com

They Aren't Here to Entertain Us

By William Becker, ParanormalInsights.net

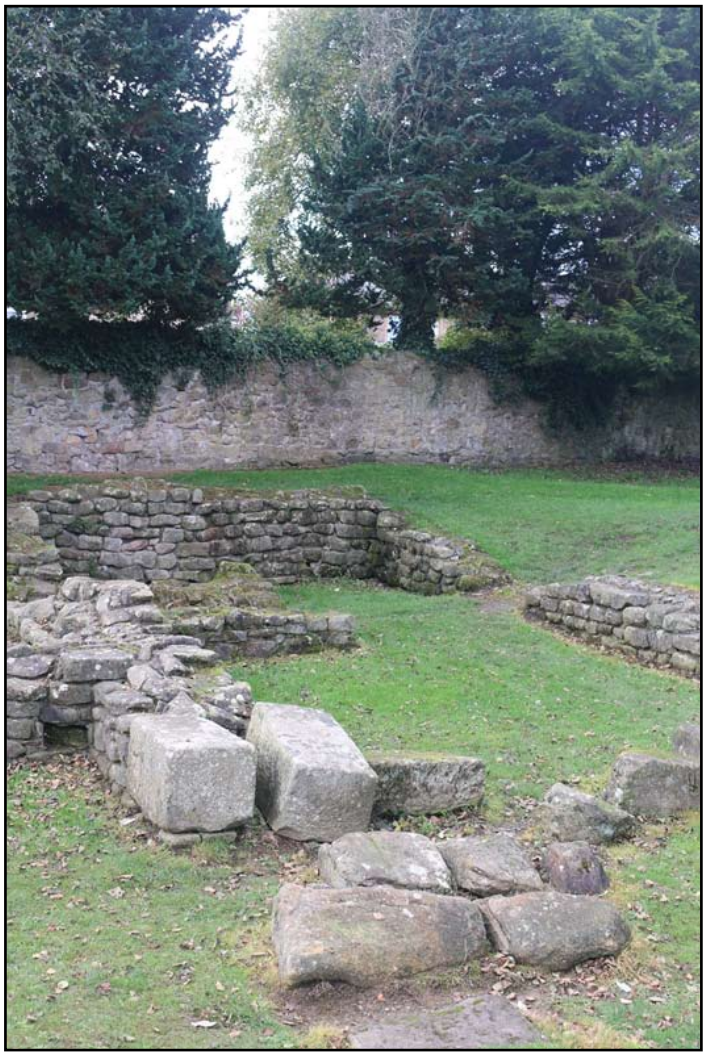
One of my favorite pastimes is traveling and meeting the various beings, often referred to as paranormal, that inhabit or visit the locations I visit. I feel very grateful that I have been able to do this both locally and all over Europe. But I want to be clear, I don't do it for kicks. I do it to learn about and understand the beings that choose to communicate with me and even to build a relationship with them when possible.

I point this out because the impression I have from much of what's on television and social media gives the impression that people are out exploring and "ghost hunting" for the thrill of experiencing paranormal activity. Please understand that I'm not accusing anyone in particular or even saying that most of what I see gives this impression. I am simply stating I do see this sort of motivation in some in the field and that my motivations for the work I do are different.

The beings I meet vary greatly. Most have been human and are what most people would call a ghost. These beings often interact with me. Sometimes all that is remaining of the people who once inhabited or visited a location is an imprint of their energy, their personality, and even the aspects of their intellect that were most prevalent in that location. They could give an entirely different impression of who they were in a different setting.

Another sort of being is what I refer to as elementals. This can include the fae or others, as well as cryptoids, such as Bigfoot. Just like entities who had been breathing humans, these beings have unique personalities and vary in their openness and desire to communicate.

Though most of my contact and communications with entities has been of a psychic nature, I am one of those people that needs to see to believe! I have seen all of the



This is a 2,000-year-old Roman bathhouse located in Ribchester, a village in England. While visiting this site, I could see those who, at one time, used the bathhouse.

beings I am talking about with my physical eye and have had other physical experiences that prove their existence to me. I don't expect others to believe my accounts of them without having their own experiences.

When I approach a paranormal being, I do so with respect, openness, and the expectation that they will, at a minimum, respect me. When I am doing my own exploration, I invite them to communicate and tell me what they want me to know. I invite them to tell me about themselves. I encourage them to give me information that they want me to share.

I DON'T ask them to jump through hoops, make sounds, or make equipment light up. I understand the need to ask for that sort of activity in an investigation as a method of proving and documenting paranormal activity. But, it's not conducive to building relationships with paranormal beings any more than it is with the "living."

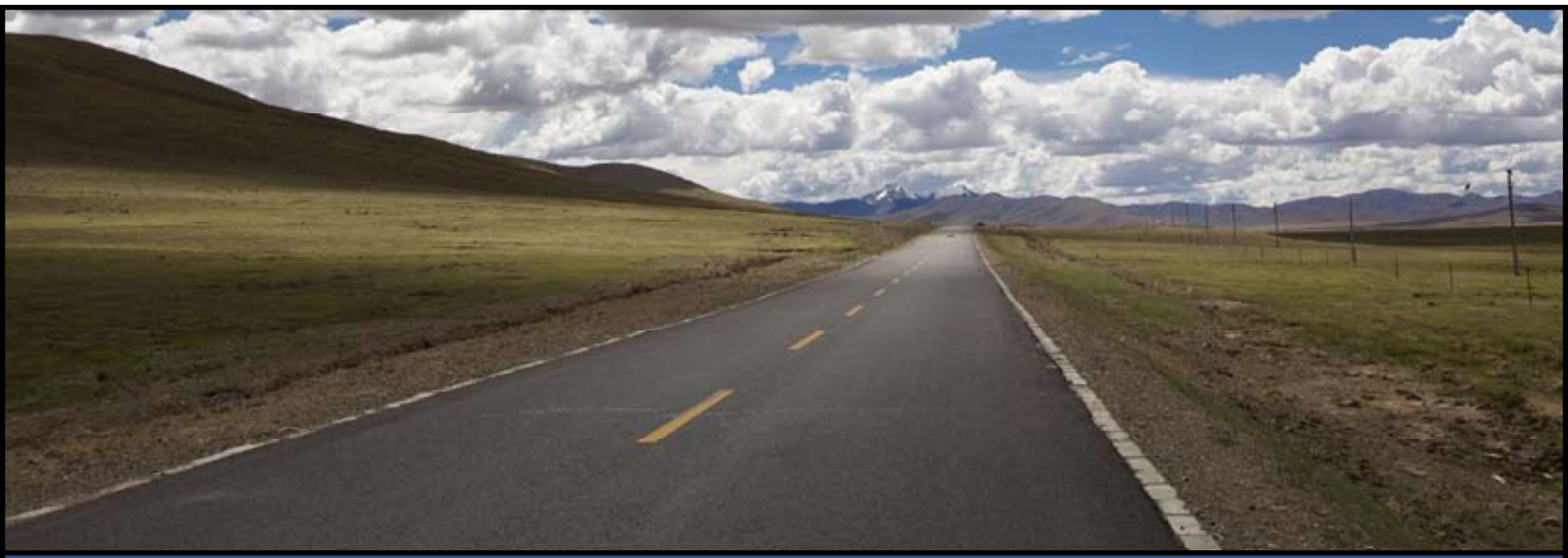
This Neolithic monument sits in Dartmoor in England. The people who once inhabited the village and used the monument let me see them and what they were doing.

The result is that I always have respectful interactions with the beings in a location. Even if they don't want me there, they are respectful in their approach. Most of the time, though, they do show me things about their lives and who and what they are. This includes entities such as Bigfoot (yes, I have seen one with my own two eyes) and other non-human beings (I have also physically seen).

I use this approach not as a trick to get them to trust me. This is just who I am and how I would want to be approached. I treat them just as I would breathing humans, only better! As a result, I get to see history unfold.

I meet fascinating beings with interesting things to say. I even make good friends with people who haven't been able to breathe for some time, even for centuries or millennium.

I make friends with beings who are not human. My life is much richer as a result.◆



ARE YOU A TRUTHSEEKER?

http://truthseekerhighway.com/
http://truthseekerforum.com/

Want to SLEEP Better?

By Karen Frazier, AuthorKarenFrazier.com

For most of my life, I've believed I was someone who didn't sleep well. In fact, that belief was so strong I often found myself awake in the middle of the night, sitting up, and wishing I could be asleep. When social media became a thing, I noticed something curious; there were lots of other people who were sitting up in the middle of the night all over the world feeling exactly as I did — that sleep would never be something they did well.

Then, I started to pay attention to how I thought and spoke about sleep and what my expectations were surrounding sleep. I noticed I frequently told people I suffered from insomnia. I also noticed my thoughts before bed each night included things like, "Oh gosh — I hope I don't have insomnia tonight" or "Hopefully, tonight my sleep won't be disturbed."

The Universe supported the thoughts by making them creations. I tossed and turned. I suffered hip pain that woke me frequently. The Universe even sent me a little dog (who I dearly love) that woke me up several times a night for seven years. The Universe wasn't being perverse or mean. It was supporting what I believed about my sleep. Once I understood this and noticed my own thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors, I was already halfway to a better night of sleep.

First came the behavioral issue with the little dog. I consulted with animal communicator Karen Anderson who reminded me my beliefs about what my dog, Monkey, was going to do each night (wake me up multiple times) was part of the reason for Monkey's behavior, and she kindly suggested I change that expectation.

She also communicated with Monkey and gave me some tools for dealing with behavioral slips, and within a few days, the behavior had ended. It has not returned, nor do I expect it will, because once I realized that behavior was in large part driven by my expectations, I was able to change the way I thought about it until my expectations changed, and then I was able to change my experience.

I also started to change my thoughts about the quality of my sleep, which also led to a change in my expectations. Every time I noticed myself slipping into my beliefs about insomnia or hoping I didn't sleep poorly, I paused for a moment, visualized myself sleeping well and waking refreshed, and repeated the affirmation, "I sleep peacefully and comfortably and wake refreshed."

I now use this affirmation every night before I go to sleep, as well as throughout the day if I notice any of my old thought patterns about sleep creeping in. One of the things I've found is along with sleeping better in general, I've noticed I am less likely to be awakened by aches and pains (such as persistent hip pain I've experienced for several years) throughout the night.

Other Solutions (Metaphysical and Physical)

I also implemented some metaphysical solutions, which serve as a reminder that the focus of my thoughts need to be on peaceful sleep. They also create an energetic vibration that is more supportive of peaceful and restful sleep.

• I keep an amethyst crystal next to my bed. Amethyst supports restful sleep.

• I spray my pillow with chamomile and lavender essential oils in a pillow spray made from three ounces of water, one ounce of vodka, and five drops each of lavender and chamomile essential oils. If you'd like to make your own, maintain the same dilution, and try other sleep-promoting scents, such as eucalyptus, bergamot, sandalwood, and clary sage.

• We use a white noise machine in our bedroom that has binaural beats for relaxation.

• I diffuse calming essential oils or blends with an aromatherapy diffuser on the bedside table.

• Each night, part of my bedtime ritual is taking a hot scented bath using essential oils or relaxing, calming scents.

• I engage in affirmations and visualization before sleep.

There are also some physical things I do to promote more restful sleep.

• No backlit screens (including computer or television) for about two hours before sleep

• No food three to four hours before going to sleep.

• No caffeine after 2 p.m.

• Keep the room temperature cool, and instead use layers of blankets or sheets to adjust the temperature accordingly.

• Regular exercise.

This has all worked well for me. I am sleeping well, and my focus is on sleeping peacefully and waking rested. It can work well for you too.

Your Better Sleep Program

• Examine your beliefs and thoughts about sleep. Notice how you think about it and what you say to others. Be aware of these thoughts, words, and beliefs.

• When you notice you're slipping into any thoughts about sleeping poorly (whether wishing and hoping you don't or telling others you never sleep well), change the thought.

• Affirm you sleep well and wake rested. Do this throughout the day when old thought patterns creep in and every night before you go to sleep.

• When you wake in the morning, express gratitude for a good night of sleep.

• Evaluate the quality of your sleep environment from both an energetic and physical perspective. Notice things that may be serving as barriers to sleep, such as room temperature, a digital glowing clock right next to your head on the bedside table, or noises that may keep you awake.

• Use energetic tools that adjust the energetic environment of your sleeping space and serve as physical reminders to notice and change your thoughts and beliefs about sleep. These can include placing crystals like amethyst and clear quartz next to the bed, performing relaxing and sleep-promoting mudras, such as Shakti mudra, incorporating pleasing sounds like binaural beats and white noise for relaxation, and using pleasing sleep-promoting scents like those noted above.

• Evaluate the quality of your personal habits and how they may affect sleep. If you're using backlit screens before bed, they could be changing your circadian rhythm. If you're consuming caffeine late in the day or alcohol right before bed, these may negatively impact sleep as well.

• Engage in a nightly bedtime ritual that tells your body and spirit you are ready for sleep, such as a nightly bath and spending some time reading an uplifting book or having a cup of chamomile tea.

With some attention to your thoughts, habits, and environments, it's possible to reprogram yourself to sleep peacefully so you won't have to sit up all night with other insomniacs on social media.

Read Karen's new energy healing book, "Higher Vibes Toolbox: Vibrational Healing for an Empowered Life," which is available on Amazon. ◆

Dream Interpretation: Garden of the Past

By Karen Frazier, AuthorKarenFrazier.com

Dream:

Dear Karen,

"I am at my grandparents' house in the back yard. I have two friends with me. I am showing them there were two gardens back there — my grandfather's and my family's garden. I am marveling at how large the garden is, although now it has gone fallow and to weeds, because it has been so many years since my family tended it.

Along the back row of the garden, I come across three small graves with crosses, which I realize are the graves of my pets. I discover a tightly sealed silver coffee can that is protected from the elements. Beside it, I find a sealed envelope with my handwriting on the seal. The envelope is addressed to me. I have difficulty reading the writing, but I understand the writing is instructing me not to open it until I am an adult. I realize the envelope is at least 30 years old, and I take scissors and cut it open.

"Inside the envelope is a toy snake that clatters around on the floor sort of chasing people. There is also a small metal airplane keychain. I don't remember making the envelope, but I conclude I put my two biggest fears (snakes and flying) in the envelope and hoped that future me would have worked those things out. I also conclude the coffee can is a time capsule, and I go to talk to my father about it.

"My dad is working in the kitchen in my grandmother's house. I ask him if we buried a time capsule, and he says yes and that it must have been around 1984 or 1985. I tell him I already opened the envelope and ask if we can open the time capsule. He says he doesn't have time to do so right now, but maybe later before we leave.

"I go back out to the garden and discover my two sisters have already opened the time capsule. They say that lizards got into it. In the capsule, I find a flute and a pair of dirty white jean shorts that I think were mine. In

the jeans shorts, I find a bunch of money in the pockets, including a tightly folded $100 bill. I think about keeping the money and not telling my sisters, but since I am not 100% certain the shorts are mine, I tell my sisters and we put the money in a pile to divide amongst us. I also notice several crystals in the time capsule.

"My father and mother are with us now, as is my grandmother. Dad is on the phone, and someone is bitching him out, because they are saying he needs to replace the toilet in the house and a few other things. He hangs up on the person, and I tell him I am confused. I ask if grandma still owns the house or if we own it, and he says neither. He says the person griping at him on the phone is the one who owns the house, so of course he won't be fixing or replacing anything."

—Anonymous

Dear Anonymous:

Thanks for sharing your dream. There are several symbols to help understand the meaning.

• Backyard — Childhood or subconscious.

• Garden — Parts of your personality/spirit that still need to be weeded out.

• Two gardens/two friends — Balance and receptivity.

• Graves — Need to delve into subconscious or completion.

• Pets from childhood — Bringing you to the past.

• Number three — Completion, inner strength, vitality, creativity, trilogy, such as past/present/future.

• Coffee can (which is silver) — Justice, purity, protective energy.

• Envelope — Anticipation, opportunity, message from another.

• Can't read your own writing — Missed communications with subconscious.

• Scissors — Decisiveness and control.

• Snake — Symbol of the unconscious and one of your admitted fears, but in this case it is a fear made silly or fun because it is a toy.

• Airplane — A symbol of another fear made silly because it is a toy. Airplane also signifies accomplishment.

• Time capsule — The past meeting the present — digging inside of yourself.

• Dad — Authority, protection love, but he is busy right now and can't revisit the past — you have important work to do and don't have time to revisit the past.

• Two sisters revisit the past instead — Other parts of you.

• Lizard — Primal instinct, creativity, renewal.

• White shorts — White is purity peace, new beginnings but slightly dirty.

• Money — Prosperity is coming, but you may wish to share it.

• Flute — Harmony and music.

• Crystals — Healing, unity, higher self.

This dream is about resolving your past and letting it go. It is filled with images from your past that show you some of your past feelings and attitudes. It tells you about past fears, which are silly in the present, because they are toys.

You see three crosses before you delve into the past, showing you that your work about the past is at completion. Even your father tells you there is no time to delve into the past. Instead, other aspects of your personality (your two sisters) do it for you. They have already dug into the past for you, and you look to see what is there.

By going through the time capsule, you are bringing the past into your present and integrating it. In it, you find symbols of purity, peace, and new beginnings, as well as symbols you may be working on now, including spirituality, prosperity, love, and healing. These symbols are slightly messy, because they have the taint of the past on them (dirt on the white shorts), but the gifts they offer are beautiful and untouched.

This dream is about shedding your past and instead working spiritually, which is yielding results for you and will continue to yield larger results. It is encouraging you to keep up with your spiritual work because it is about to pay off in your life. The dream is telling you not to give up and to stop worrying about the past. You've healed the past; it is time for the present.

—Karen

Read Karen's new dream interpretation book, "Dark of Night in the Light of Day: The Art of Interpreting Your Dreams," which is now available on Amazon. ◆

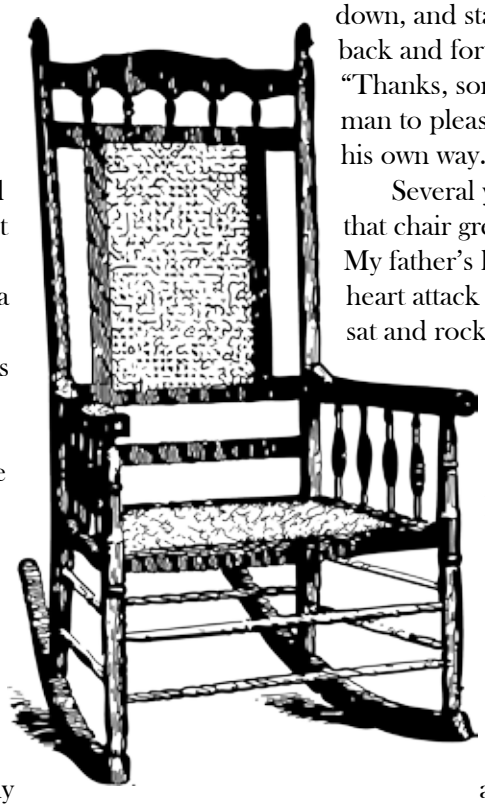
THE *ROCKING CHAIR*

By Willie Windwalker Gibson

I was thinking about a good story for Christmas this year, and I remembered something that happened to me about three months after my father's death in 1984.

I was working as a cop in summer 1980, four years before my father passed. I was on patrol at the fairgrounds in Louisville, Kentucky, and I realized I needed fuel. I rolled across the road and went in to pay for my gas with the company credit card.

The little store sold a lot of different things that local people made. It sold quilts, baskets, candy, and sometimes furniture. This particular night they had some new furniture local furniture makers had dropped off; most of the furniture was Amish made. I noticed in a corner of the store there was a rocking chair.



I walked over and looked at it. It was beautifully made with awesome carvings on it. It was priced $100. I looked at it, and I thought about my dad. He told me one time that he would love to have a rocking chair. So I went to the cashier and bought it. It barely fit in the trunk of my police car.

I took the rocking back to headquarters and put it in the truck of my car at the end of my watch. Then I took the rocking chair home to my father. When I took it into the house, my father was sitting in the living room watching the news. I said, "Old man, got something for you."

He looked away from the TV and saw me standing there with the rocking chair.

He got up and looked at the chair. "That for me," he asked?

"Yes," I said.

He walked over and sat down in the rocking chair. He started rocking back and forth. Then he stopped, looked up at me, and said, "It will do."

He pulled the rocking chair in front of the TV, sat down, and started watching the news again, rocking back and forth. That was my father's way of saying, "Thanks, son." I was pleased. My father was a hard man to please and really strict, but he was loving in his own way.

Several years passed, and my father's love for that chair grew. No one sat in that chair but him. My father's health was also failing. He had a major heart attack and two strokes. Yet my father always sat and rocked in that chair. He suffered some brain damage from the strokes, but he could tell you, "My chair," and nobody bothered that chair.

Then one day in October 1984, Dad's chair stopped rocking. He passed away from his last heart attack. Everyone was in shock, but not surprised. My dad was only 60 years old when he passed. But he was a fighter. He fought in World War II and came home with a bronze star. He fought discrimination, being part Cherokee and Irish. He fought working in the factories for little pay. He fought raising five children with all the stress that goes with that. Dad didn't ask for much for himself, so when I saw that rocking chair, he was going to get it come hell or high water.

It was two days before Christmas 1984, when I was working at a hotel as a security agent. I was on the late watch. It was almost Christmas, and it was the first Christmas without dad. I got off work and went by the cemetery to say hi and Merry Christmas to Dad.

When I got to the new grave, I could see that dad's marker had been laid by the American Legion. It said Robert Gibson PFC United States Army. The ground was still soft, but the marker looked good on my dad's grave.

I got back into my car went home. I was living with Mom to make sure she was taken care of, as her health was failing. I opened the front door, went in, and closed the door. I was in the living room, and it was about 9 a.m. I sat down on the couch and stared at dad's empty rocking chair, remembering the time I brought it to him and thinking of how I missed him. My eyes got heavy, and I feel to sleep sitting on the couch.

I suddenly woke up and could feel a chill in the room. I looked at the chair, and it was rocking back and forth, as if someone was in it. I looked over and saw the front door wide open. I looked around for Mom, but she must have still been sleeping. I looked back at the chair rocking back and forth.

"Dad, is that you?" I asked.

The chair stopped rocking. I felt a cold hand on my shoulder and a light squeeze, as if to let me know it was him.

> I LOOKED AT THE CHAIR, AND IT WAS ROCKING BACK AND FORTH, AS IF SOMEONE WAS IN IT.

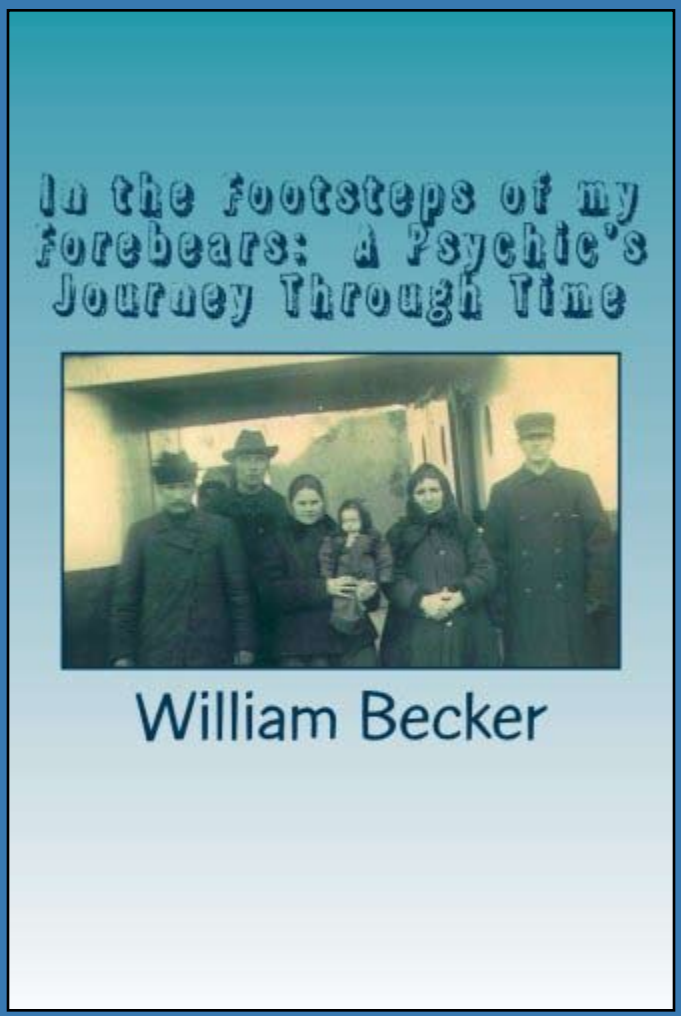
"Dad, do not worry about Mom. She will be OK with us kids watching over her," I said.

I felt the hand leave my shoulder. The front door closed with a big slam. I could sense I was alone in the room. I sat back, looked at that rocking chair, and thought, *Well Dad, you just had to have one more rock in that chair.*

I sat back, closed my eyes, and went back to sleep. This would not be the last time, though, that my dad would come visit me. Through the years, Dad has come to see me many times and given me much advice and counsel.

I guess if you get anything from this story, it would be always be kind to your parents. Let them know you love them.

This Christmas story from 1984 is true, another story of Merry Christmas from the great beyond. ◆



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Conspiracy Theories:
What We Know vs. What We Believe

By Krystle Vermes, getspooked.net

Conspiracy theories have been around for ages, but what makes some a true conspiracy theory believer? Scientists recently wanted to figure it out. After all, there has to be a difference between "us and them," right?

Scientists at the Free University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands recently hypothesized that there may be a distinction between non-believers and believers. They broke it down like this: Why is it that some people are limited in their beliefs vs. others?

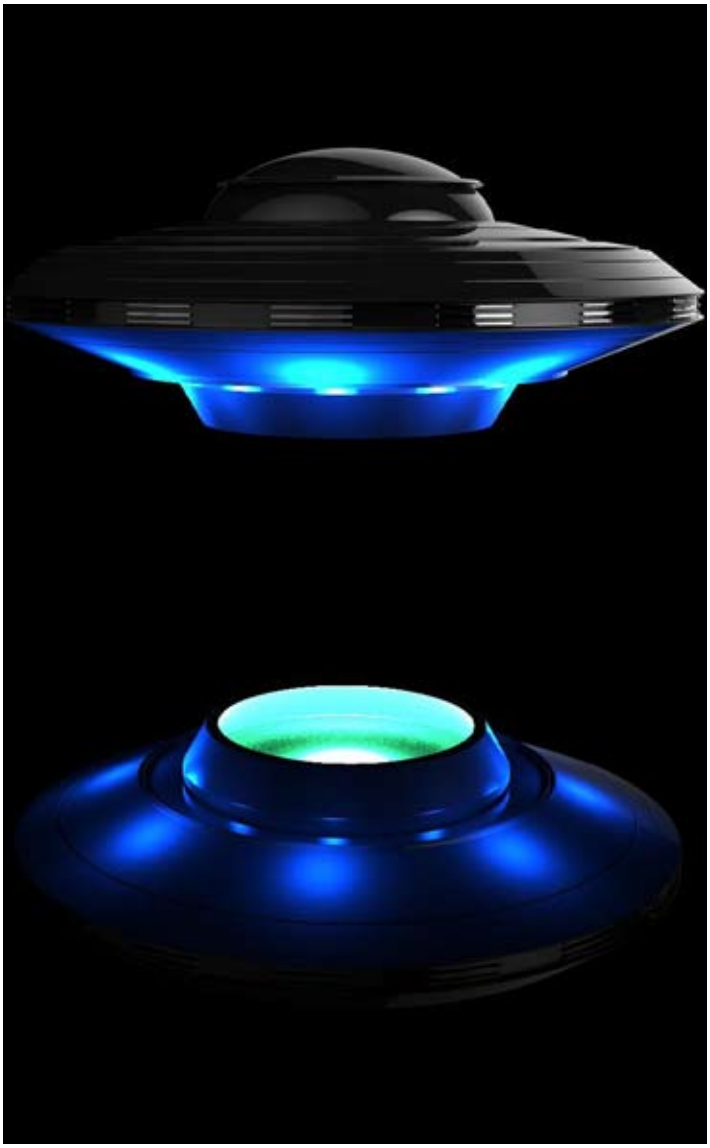
To find the answer to this question, they started by surveying 264 Americans about their beliefs in popular conspiracy theories, some of which have already proven to be false (e.g., Red Bull contains illegal substances that raise desire for the product).

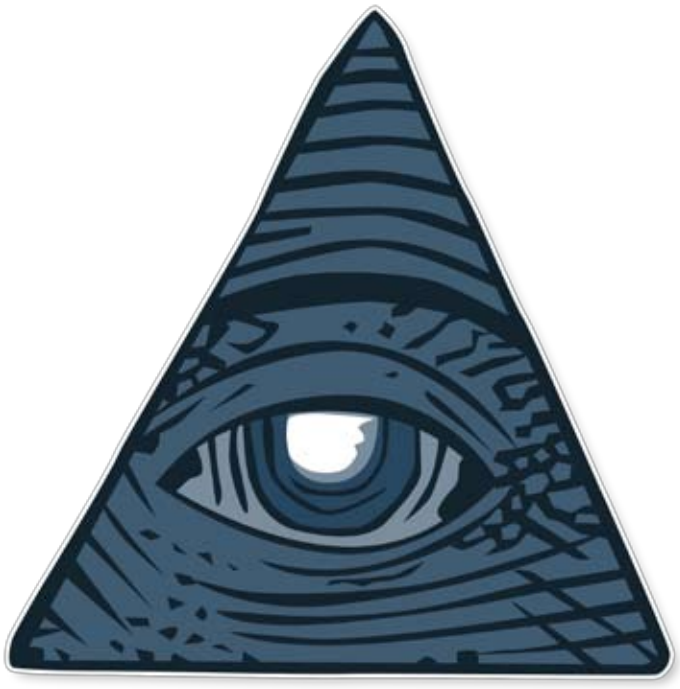
After the survey, the participants viewed 100 random coin tosses. They were asked if there was likely a mysterious reason as to why the outcome was heads or tails (i.e., a conspiracy). In the end, the people who believed there may be a reason were more likely to believe in conspiracy theories.

But the researchers didn't stop there.

They also surveyed 214 people who were asked to view two paintings. The participants were told that the artist of the first painting used a specific technique, while the artist of the second completed the painting at random. Surprisingly, the people who were more likely to believe in conspiracy theories saw patterns and technique in the second painting.

With this information, we may now know why conspiracy theorists see something in the night sky when we look up and don't see anything at all.





"Perceptual illusions can be seen, interpreted, and used in two very different aspects: On the one hand, and this is the common property assigned to illusions, they are used to entertain people," concluded the authors in their report. "They are a part of our everyday culture; they can kill time. On the other hand, they are often the starting point for creating insights. And insights, especially if they are based on personal experiences through elaborative processes actively, are perfect pre-conditions to increase understanding and to improve and optimize mental models."

Perhaps this is why some people see reason to believe in the Men in Black and government interference when something goes awry. In short, it may simply depend on the limitations of our imaginations.

"When people need even more proof of reality than via the naked eye, they intuitively try to touch the to-be-analyzed entity (if at all possible) in order to investigate it haptically," wrote the authors of the report. "Feeling something by touch seems to be the ultimate perceptual experience in order for humans to speak of physical proof."

But even when the five senses can't be used to deliver proof, we have to imagine that the brains of believers still work in different ways. There have been too many instances of conspiracy theorists wreaking havoc on our real world to say otherwise.

While this study does not attest to the grand scope of the conspiracy theorist's mind, it opens the door for a wider discussion of what it may hold comparatively to the rest of us.◆

Maria Anna van Driel author of;
'The NWO, their thoughts…your life' It's time to wake up, we are the illusion
'Our mind in a controlled quantum Euclidean space?
Natural and unnatural energies as a global weapon for mind and behavior control
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BAD LUCK & DEATH OMENS

By Winter M. Balefire, WinterBalefire.com

We are all familiar with old superstitions, and I've previously covered a few, including the number 13, walking under a ladder, or spilling salt. But there are some superstitions in other parts of the world you may not be familiar with. Here are a few.

Tuesday the 13th

In Greece and Spain, Tuesday the 13th is considered just as unlucky as Friday the 13th in America.

There are a few theories behind this belief. Tuesday is ruled by Mars, the God of war. In Greece, each time Constantinople fell was on a Tuesday.

The number 13 ruins the perfection of the number 12. There are 12 months in a year, 12 hours separating morning and evening, and 12 Gods of Olympus.

In Spain, there is a saying about Tuesday the 13th. It warns to never get married, go on a trip, or move away on this day.

Death to a Sailor

Though smoking is known to cause many health issues, lighting your cigarette with a candle in certain parts of Eastern and Northern Europe can be fatal but not to you.

Many hold the superstition that if you light your cigarette with a candle, a sailor will die.

This dates back to when sailors needed to find work in between cargo trips. Many would make and sell matches to supplement their income. So, if you skip the match and use a candle, you're denying a sailor his income, and they may starve to death.

Cutting Nails at Night

There are many theories behind this Japanese superstition. A likely start to this belief was before the time of nail clippers or electricity. Many were too busy during the day in the field, so nail trimming was probably done in the dark or near a fire with sharp objects. This was obviously a risky practice.

Some scarier reasons also exist. Your nails are part of you, connected to your being, so cutting them at night creates an opening in your body for spirits to enter.

If that's not spooky enough, if your nails happen to fall into the fire, this may confuse spirits that a cremation is occurring and may bring your own death.

Sweeping at Night

For those of Hindu belief, the Goddess Lakshmi brings wealth and good fortune. However, she only visits after sundown. If you choose to sweep your home during the evening, she'll have no choice but to avoid you, and you'll be open to receiving bad luck.

Upside Down Bread

When in Italy, make sure your bread is always right side up. Placing bread upside down is considered very bad luck, as is leaving a knife stuck in a loaf of bread. This is thought to be from the belief that bread is a symbol for the body of Christ.

Scissors

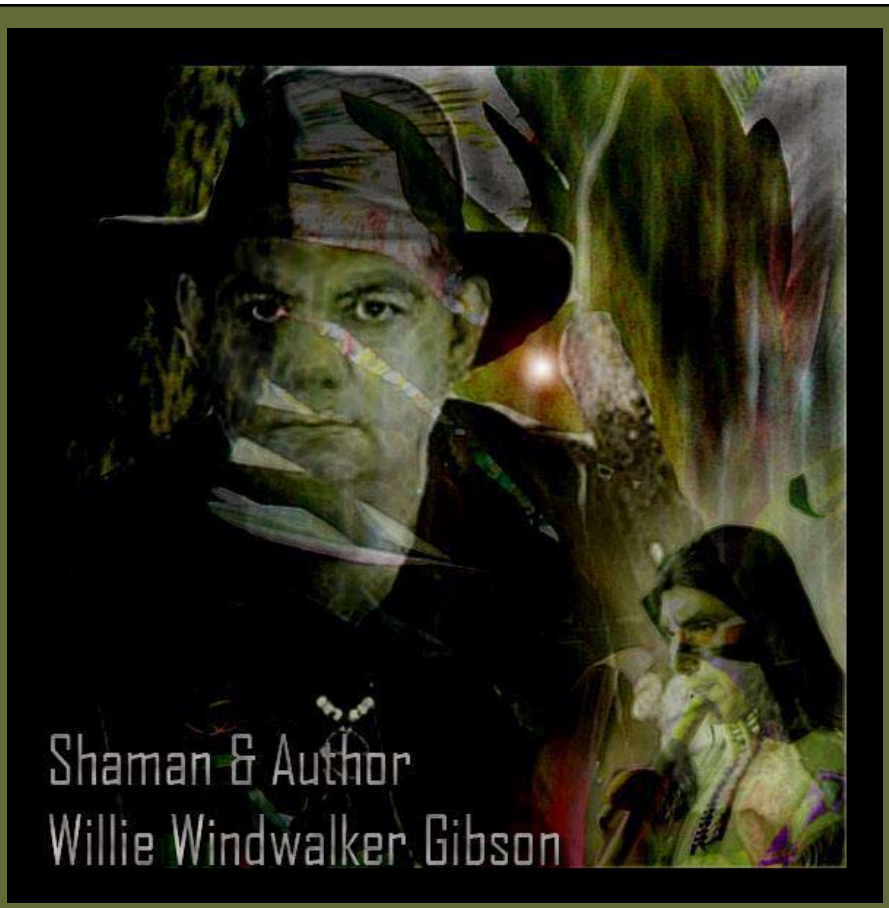
In Egypt, be careful what you do with scissors. They hold the superstition that if you make a cutting motion without anything between the blades, you may be cutting an unseen spirit and therefore making them very angry with you.

Toasting With Water

This superstition is believed in many parts of the world. The origin is from Greek mythology, when the dead would drink from the River Lethe in the underworld.

Drinking from this river assured they would forget their earthly connections and mortal body. Therefore, the Greeks would toast the dead with water to wish them well in their travels through the underworld on this river.

Toasting with water at a regular celebration is believed to bring bad luck or even death.◆



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A Frightening Weekend at The Stanley Hotel

By Deborah Lantz, Psychic Medium, DebLantz.com

I was invited to be a guest speaker at an event several years ago at The Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, Colorado. The site was made famous by Stephen King's 1977 book *The Shinning*. This majestic, old hotel has lots of old-world charm. It is an absolutely breathtaking hotel with 140 guests rooms and more than 14,000 square feet of hotel space. It overlooks the quaint town of Estes Park, presiding over the town like a grand old dame.

My son, Nick, and I had been conducting lectures throughout the United States based on our paranormal adventures. This was to be another weekend for us on our convention circuit, but it turned out to be much more than we bargained for. The spirits who still retain residence at The Stanley were well prepared for our visit, and so our paranormal adventure began.

I was familiar with the hotel from its fame and notoriety that following the publishing of *The Shinning*. The hotel served as inspiration for the book. King and his wife, Tabitha, spent the night in room 217. They were the only guests that night, because the following day the hotel was set to close for winter.

That night King had a restless night's sleep that included a strange dream involving his three-year-old son running through the halls, screaming in terror as he was being chased by a firehose. This served as inspiration for the book. However, in the book, the actual room 217 was changed to 237.

There have been many claims throughout the history of The Stanley of guests fleeing their rooms in terror in the middle of the night. Someone you might be familiar with is comedian and TV and movie star Jim Carey. Apparently, Jim requested room 217 during the filming of *Dumb and Dumber*, but checked out after only several

While staying at The Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, Colorado, psychic Deb Lantz and her son, Nick, experienced paranormal phenomena, including hearing and seeing spirits in and around the hotel.

hours, as reported by the staff, and spent the night in another local hotel. Nobody on staff knows exactly what happened to Jim that night.

Other stories from room 217 are that after unsuspecting guests check into the room, their luggage is mysteriously unpacked and put away for them — even though no staff had reported doing this task for the guests.

There have been tales of seeing the original owner and builder of The Stanley, Freelan Oscar Stanley, drifting through the corridors of the hotel, even though he died in Massachusetts in 1940 from an apparent heart attack. In fact, he and his wife have both been spotted in the lobby and billiards room.

There have been reports of phantom footsteps of children running down the halls of the fourth floor and of pipe tobacco smells and the clinking of glasses. Other stories reported to the staff are that of guests and staff alike having their clothes tugged and pulled by unseen hands.

Our weekend at The Stanley included most of what is described in this article and then some. We were given a beautiful room on the fourth floor. That night, neither of us got much sleep due to the men's voices I kept hearing right outside our door. When one of us would get up to check who had disrupted our sleep, there would be no one there ... no one living that is.

The next day, as I was descending the staircase, I saw a very distinguished man in spirit, smoking a pipe. He tipped his hat to me as he was seated in a chair very comfortably. He was an older bearded gentleman. Not sure whom I saw seated there, but it was a very pleasant encounter.

Later that day, I was standing outside the hotel chatting with another speaker, when a Native American spirit introduced himself as Chief Joseph. He wanted to tell me that he was upset because of the construction going on behind the hotel. At that time, I was unaware that they were indeed building directly behind the old hotel. I found out later from a staff member that The Stanley had recently expanded to offer condominiums, which were to be located, guess where? Right behind the hotel!

My next encounter with one of The Stanley's was located not in the hotel itself, but in the building located directly to the right, known as the concert hall. This building is on the grounds of The Stanley and is where the event was to be held where I would be speaking at later that day. I was scheduled to do a gallery reading with another psychic.

I entered the beautifully appointed room. The chairs were seated in a semicircle around where I was to be seated. I was impressed by how beautiful the room was with its little chandelier hanging from the ceiling and the gorgeous, old mirror across the room; upon entering the

Room 217 at The Stanley Hotel is said to be a hotbed of paranormal activity. It partly inspired the premise of Stephen King's book *The Shining*.

room, I felt that we were not alone. There was an oddly shaped door on my right with no door handle. I sensed that our ghostly visitor was directly behind the door.

I tried to pry open the door by slipping my fingers in the small space between the door and the door jam. I couldn't do it. The door wouldn't budge. Before our clients arrived for our gallery reading, I asked out loud if the spirit would please open the door. As soon as I said the word "door," it opened up very slowly. I was startled, and I must admit I let out a little girl scream. That was the first time for me that a ghost opened a door for me on request.

Nick's experience happened that evening during the official investigation for the convention. He was walking down the same hall in the concert hall's lower level with his video camera — the same floor where I had my encounter with the ghost-opening door. Nick said he heard someone whispering in his ear. He turned to see who had spoken to him with his video camera running. There was no one there, but the same door of my gallery reading opened on its own! This was the door into my gallery reading room, not the same door that had opened early that day for me. Nick let out a couple expletives, but he did capture this on film.

Our weekend at the famous Stanley Hotel proved to be quite an adventure! There is no doubt that The Stanley still has ghostly visitors roaming its beautiful property, checking in with the guests and even having courtesy enough to open doors upon request.

If you are looking for a ghostly experience, may I humbly suggest The Stanley Hotel? For more information about The Stanley Hotel, visit http://www.stanleyhotel.com/. ◆

Investigating the Haunted Singleton Community Center

By Bob Fountain, Spectral Tech

It's not often that you get a request from a functioning city organization to investigate one of its facilities. It was a surprise for us when the City of Bartlett, Tennessee, Singleton Community Center Programs Manager invited us to investigate activities within their building.

One of our newest members, Tara Finley, works at the community center during her summer breaks from the University of Tennessee. When she mentioned to Programs Manager Beth Luster that she was in a paranormal team, Beth made arrangements to meet with us and determine if an investigation was warranted. From our initial talks, we felt an investigation was in order.

Reported paranormal activity at the Singleton Community Center in Bartlett, Tennessee, includes staff having their clothes and hair pulled, hearing disembodied footsteps, and seeing apparitions.

The building was built around 1890 and became one of the first schools in Shelby County. The building was built on the back side of an old plantation and used to be in an area that housed the slaves from the plantation. It was also in an area where local Indian tribes met and traded. The building was also used to house the sick in the distant past, possibly yellow fever victims, where they were housed in the current basement area until they got better or died. The building was abandoned for several years before being developed into a community center.

A psychic, who visited the building once, told some of the staff that they felt the area was in a psychic vortex that contributed to the paranormal activity experienced in the building.

On August 9, the Spectral Tech team began our initial investigation of the Singleton Community Center.

Claims of Activity

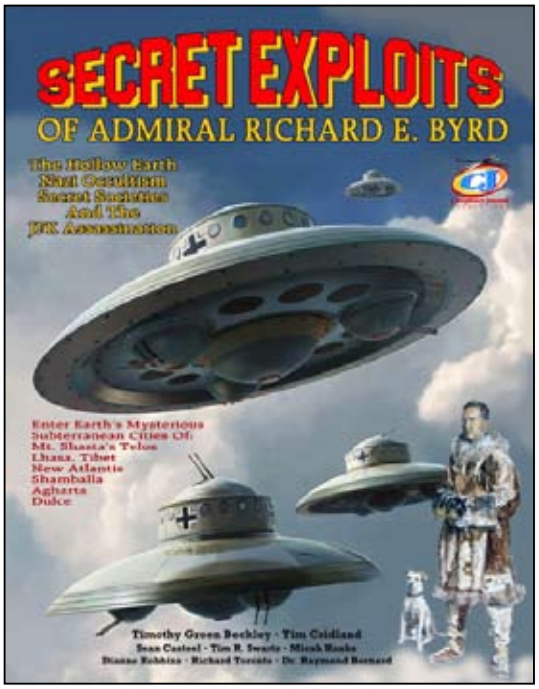
Meeting with the community center staff, we inventoried some of the experiences they have had in the center. No one felt that the experiences were either negative or threatening, but they wanted confirmation that these experiences were indeed real and not a result of overactive imaginations. The standard quote was that they just wanted to know if they were going crazy.

Some of the claims included:

- Several of the staff had seen a man in overalls walking down the halls, but the man could never be found.
- Hearing doors rattling but finding no one there.
- Hearing footsteps at night when no one else is there.
- Several people have seen gray mists forming and moving on the first floor.

→

DID ADMIRAL RICHARD E. BYRD LEAD A SECRET "PRIVATE LIFE" AWAY FROM THE PRYING EYES OF THE PUBLIC? WHAT WAS HIS ULTIMATE INVOLVEMENT WITH THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY?



Several years ago a mysterious manuscript said to be Admiral Richard E. Byrd's Private Diary emerged. In it Byrd wrote about a vast ice free "paradise" beyond the Poles:

"We are crossing over the small mountain range and still proceeding northward as best as can be ascertained. Beyond the mountain range is what appears to be a valley with a small river or stream running through the center portion. There should be no green valley below! Something is definitely wrong and abnormal here! We should be over Ice and Snow! To the port side are great forests growing on the mountain slopes. Our navigation instruments are still spinning, the gyroscope is oscillating back and forth!"

During his career as an explorer, up until his death in March 1957, Byrd was considered a national hero. Besides exploring both Poles, it is alleged that the veteran Navy commander had come upon an entrance way that led into a Hollow Earth inhabited by a race of giants.

Rumor also has it that Byrd, during his 1947 expedition, was confronted by a "lost" Battalion of Nazis whose settlement was being guarded by a fleet of back engineered "Flying Saucers." And while Byrd's scientific team was supposed to stay for six months in this frozen region, his expedition was called off shortly after his arrival.

What is generally not known is that on one of Byrd's sojourns to Antarctica, he sought to stave off mutiny from among his crew by enlisting some of the younger members into a very secretive "Loyal Legion," which enabled him to clamp down on any leaks about his missions and discoveries.

And while the content of Byrd's "secret diary" is open to debate, researcher and author Tim Cridland searches deeply into the many shadowy unknowns surrounding Byrd and the Nazis as well as a previously undisclosed wrinkle: a closely guarded connection between JFK's assassination to the iron grip of those determined to keep the secrets surrounding UFOs and the arrival of ultra-terrestrials locked away from public scrutiny forever. This conspiracy involved members of a sinister secret group of wealthy and "well connected" individuals that included Lyndon Johnson, John Connelly and at least one member of Byrd's family among its ranks.

This book takes a wholly original approach to a great many areas of interest revolving around the concept that our Earth is "hollow," and that a vast cavern system, constructed eons ago, exists connecting various subterranean cities with their hidden gateways back to the surface world. Both benevolent beings as well as "denizens of the deep" are said to populate this hidden realm.

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• One of the staff had their clothes and hair pulled.

• When asking if anyone is in one of the male restroom upstairs, they get a response but find no one is in the restroom.

• Activity is not localized within one area, but is experienced throughout the building complex.

Initial Investigation and Analysis

Before beginning the investigation, an initial sweep of the building with our EMF meters indicated there was substantial EMF leakage throughout the building. Three types of EMF meters were used, and all of them detected this leakage. Considering the age of the building, the wiring installed in the older parts of the building was not shielded as well as it might have been in modern buildings.

We explained to the staff that this leakage has been known to create feelings of paranoia in people who are sensitive to this kind of emission. Feelings of being watched and sometimes hearing and seeing things that are not there is a common occurrence for those who are sensitive to these emissions.

Those who are not sensitive to this phenomenon feel nothing and often think those who do simply have an overactive imagination. Unfortunately, these emissions also interfered with any possibility of getting meaningful interaction with this type of equipment.

Because of the high degree of EMF leaking throughout the building, the possibility of how it affected people engulfed in it every day was a consideration that had to be taken into account.

Although the night vision cameras caught several anomalies, most of these were immediately identified as insects and dust and ruled out for this investigation.

Even though the EMF radiation was high, we did capture what appeared to be voices on the digital recorder placed by the Boo Buddy teddy bear, which was placed in a room associated with a little girl who supposedly died and was associated with the community center. There was no one in the room when this recording session was being recorded. What stood out with this data was that the voices captured were all male voices.

Another point of interest was in another area in the building when Tara asked if an entity was a child. There was a response by a male voice that appears to say, "Taramoc," which could possibly be the name of a Native American still present in this location. We plan on further investigating this line of inquiry.

Out of five hours and 22 minutes of digital recordings, we captured six EVPs that were notable.

Since it appears there is nothing really negative or threatening in the community center, and it simply just may be entities just trying to get someone's attention, it will be up to those at the center if they wish further investigations to attempt to find out more.

It's Not Over

Further proof that entities are indeed in the building and wish to be known happened several weeks after our investigation.

Beth contacted us to tell us one of our K-II meters was left behind by accident. We told her we would pick it up the next time we were in the area, and she said she would keep it on her desk until we retrieved it. She did not know that it was still on when she placed it on her desk. There it sat dormant for the next two weeks.

To her surprise, it came to life the day she was meeting with some contractors about making some renovations to the building. As they began discussing changes they planned to make, the K-II lit up on her desk and started to go to red. Needless to say, this startled her and the contractors.

One of the staff members present, who was with us during our investigation, remembered how we used these devices and began to ask questions. And, they got responses. Apparently, it didn't like the thought of changing things but was OK with painting the walls yellow. Apparently, it decided to be part of the meeting and just wanted to provide its input.

To further add to the idea that it was an intelligence manipulating the K-II meter was the fact that every time she tried to use her phone to videotape the meter, it went dormant. As soon as she stopped trying to record it, it would again light up.

Beth was more than glad when we came to get the K-II meter from her. We have yet to schedule another visit to the community center, but, hopefully, the entities inhabiting the building will be willing to talk to us.

Maybe we should all dress in yellow. ◆

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'Claiming Her Heart'

By Ellis Leigh

Q&A by Michelle M. Pillow, MichellePillow.com

A storyteller from the time she could talk, *USA Today* bestselling paranormal romance author Ellis Leigh grew up among family legends of hauntings, psychics, and love spanning decades. Those stories didn't always have the happiest of endings, so they inspired her to write about real life, real love, and the difficulties therein. From farmers to werewolves, store clerks to witches — if there's love to be found, she'll write about it.

Ellis lives in the Chicago area with her husband, daughters, and a German Shepherd that refuses to leave her side. Her latest book, *Claiming Her Heart*, a return to the *Feral Breed*, just released.

* * * * *

Author Ellis Leigh lives in the Chicago area with her husband, daughters, and German Shepherd.

Q: In your book, *Claiming Her Heart,* you explore wolf shape-shifters. What inspired you to write about this?

Ellis: I fell back in love with paranormal romances during the *Twilight* years. Vampires and shape-shifters became my reading drug of choice for a few years, but after awhile, I decided that I had stories of my own to tell with my own world building.

When it comes to dealing with shape-shifters, I like to base their behavior and actions on those of the animals they become. With wolves, that means strong family units and working together to stay safe and protect their families. That sort of fierce determination is definitely inspiring and creates a lot of tension when they're challenged.

Q: Why do you think readers are fascinated by the paranormal?

Ellis: These types of stories are found in every culture around the world and have endured for generations. They're something that link us all — this oral tradition of storytelling to explain the strange and unusual.

Q: Have you ever had a paranormal experience?

Ellis: My grandmother saw ghosts, and her cousin read tea leaves, so paranormal stuff has always been a part of my everyday life. When I started seeing shadows and lights that couldn't be explained, my grandma told me to never be afraid of what didn't make sense, to avoid Ouija boards at all costs, and to always, always keep a set of tarot cards in the house. Mine happen to hate my husband, so he never touches them.

Q: What kind of paranormal creatures do you wish you could meet?

Ellis: Selkies. Definitely. I have a bit of an obsession with them. The idea of crying into the sea bringing a shape-shifting seal to you is oddly romantic for me. I've been thinking about them for years and am planning a trip to Scotland in 2019 for research.

Q: What does the future hold for the world of the *Feral Breed*?

Ellis: I've been talking about *Claiming Her Heart* in terms of is this the end or a new beginning? I think it's a new beginning within the *Feral Breed* world for sure — two determined, independent mates following each other around the world as they pull heists, meeting new friends along the way.

→

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CREEPY CRATE
BY THE LINEUP

Plus, there are a few *Feral Breed* members who never got their HEA *cough*Sandman*cough*, so it might just be time to go back to the club and see what they're all up to. What could be more fun?

Q: Have you ever been to a psychic?

Ellis: I've been to plenty. As I mentioned above, my grandmother's cousin read tea leaves. Having her do a reading was simply part of every holiday.

I've also been to others who claim to be psychic, though I doubt many of them. When you've been around the real thing for so long, seeing the con is a little easier. I still love to go, though, and I've had some accurate readings along the way.

Q: If you could be anywhere while writing, where would you be and why?

Ellis: Ireland. Definitely. Somewhere on the coast where it could be gray and rainy, and I wouldn't care because I'd have my laptop. And my electric blanket.

Q: If you could channel into another author's mind to find out how they wrote a particular book, who would it be? Why?

Ellis: Definitely Kelley Armstrong. *Her Women of the Otherworld* series is a serious favorite of mine. I'd LOVE to pick her brain on how she built her witches and werewolves into such an amazingly powerful world of characters.

"I've been talking about *Claiming Her Heart* in terms of is this the end or a new beginning? I think it's a new beginning within the *Feral Breed* world for sure."

Q: What is your favorite ghost story?

Ellis: I've lived in Chicago for almost 16 years now, and the story of Resurrection Mary still gets to me. A young girl on the side of the road in her party dress waiting for some nice passing motorist to take her home? And all the accounts of people seeing her or picking her up? Amazing and still going on today. It's one I love to check in on now and again.

A lot of people don't know that there's a similar ghost who haunts Chinatown, but it's an elderly lady. For years, young men have reported being asked for a ride by the lady, who gets into their car and then disappears before they can take her where she wants to go.

Honestly, though, Chicago is ripe for ghost stories. The curse of Streeterville, the hauntings of the Saint Valentine's Day Massacres, John Dillinger's ghost in the alley by the Biograph, the screaming lady in the Red Lion pub ... this place is a gold mine for fun, paranormal hunting.

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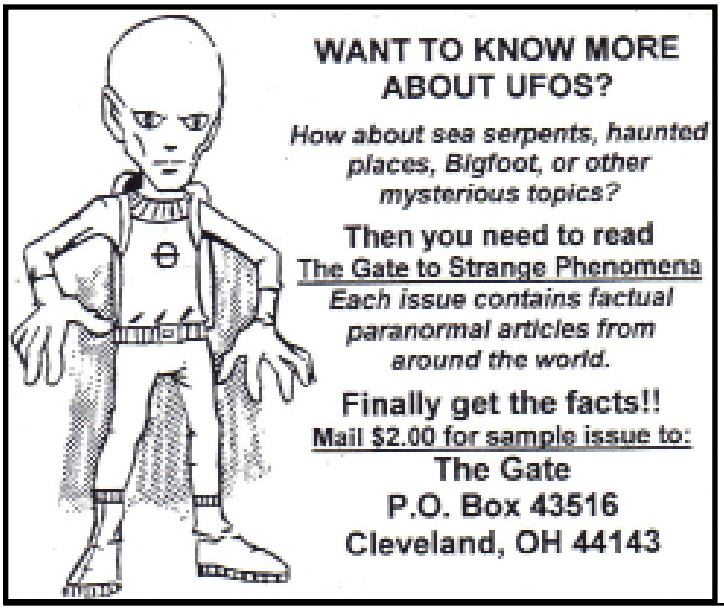
To learn more about Ellis Leigh and her books, visit http://www.ellisleigh.com/. ◆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